DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 143 707 TM 006 517

TITLE	Proceedings of the Conference on Educational Accountability.
INSTITUTION	Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J.
PUB DATE	Mar 71
NOTE	109p.; Preprints from Proceedings of the Conferences on Educational Accountability (Washington, D.C., Hollywood, California, March, 1971); for related document, see ED 051 313
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$6.01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; *Conference Reports; *Educational Accountability; Educational Objectives; Effective Teaching; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Criteria; Evaluation Methods; Instructional Programs; Performance Contracts; *Program Evaluation; *Public School Teachers; School Administration; *Teacher Responsibility

ABSTRACT

This Educational Testing Service conference provided an opportunity to clarify many of the issues and problems involved with educational accountability. Among these issues were assessment, evaluation, auditing, and performance contracting. The papers included in these proceedings are: The Means and Ends of Accountability (Terrel H. Bell); Issues in Implementation (Nolan Estes, Donald R. Waldrip and Robert W. Locke); Possible Effects on Instructional Programs (Albert Shanker); Public Expectations (Wilson C. Riles, H. Thomas James, Scarvia B. Anderson); The Role of Evaluation (Henry S. Dyer); and The Future of Accountability (John W. Porter). (MV)

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Proceedings of the
Conference
on

Educational Accountability

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WASHINGTON, D.C.
HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA
MARCH, 1971

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Conferences

on

Educational Accountability

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PREFACE

William W. Turnbull

Both professional and public attention is focused these days on the concept of educational accountability. The word "accountability" has as many meanings as people care to give it and is often used in connection with such activities as assessment, evaluation, auditing, and performance contracting.

So great is the interest -- and so meager the clarification of the many issues and problems involved -- that the need for a comprehensive look at the concept prompted Educational Testing Service to sponsor these conferences.

We were indeed fortunate that some of the most knowledgeable and thoughtful people concerned with the philosophy, strategies, and pitfalls of accountability in education accepted our invitation to participate in the conferences. Each of them has provided a substantive and challenging contribution to better understanding of what is involved in developing and implementing accountability programs of integrity and merit.

We are also indebted to John H. Fischer, the conference chairman, whose contributions to education's "accountability" in the broadest sense have few parallels.

Because of the urgent need for dissemination of information about accountability the speakers' papers, in their pre-conference form, have been assembled in this booklet for immediate distribution.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

John H. Fischer

We had planned to include in this publication a brief introduction by Dr. Fischer in which he would present his views on educational accountability. Unfortunately, he became ill, and as a consequence will be unable either to prepare his remarks or to participate in the conferences.

THE MEANS AND ENDS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Terrel H. Bell

The Broad Concept of Accountability

The whole idea of accountability is related to the proposition that if the student has not learned the school has not taught. The school, or the teacher, or someone must account for learning failure. But the concept of accountability goes beyond this. It is dedicated to the central belief that we can develop a much more effective education system by studying learning inputs and outcomes. By studying the means and ends of learning, we may be able to, at long last, utilize the scientific method in teaching and learning. The current emphasis on accountability reflects our frustration about our schools. Much more is being demanded than we have been able to produce. Until we solve the problem of accountability -- quantifying inputs and output -- little hope is seen for arriving at solutions to many of the great issues facing the schools. Accountability in education is more than testing of students and evaluating teacher competence. In its full context, we must view accountability as concerned with all factors related to learning input and output.

It is important to give emphasis to this because accountability has been tied closely to instructional personnel. We think

of rewards and punishment and of paying more dollars to teachers whose students perform well and less dollars to those teachers whose students fail to meet a standard of expectation. Accountability should be applied to the materials and media of instruction. It must relate to time and scheduling. It should also address itself to questions such as:

- What is the educational worth of a specific 150 frame sequence of programmed learning material in remediating a particular diagnosed learning deficiency?
- What is the educational worth of a video tape or a film?

Accountability is also related to school administrative decision making:

- What cost-benefit value can we attach to $50,000 redeployed from subject matter supervisors in the central office of a school system to employ tutors or teacher aides?
- Do students learn chemistry in a chemistry laboratory and foreign languages in a language laboratory?

Seeking reasonably objective evidence to answer these questions is not easy, but accountability must take such questions into its accounting. Seeking solutions to such problems will lead administrators to conclude that installing accountability systems might well do much to shape up the management of schools as well as the teaching side of the operation. Accountability looks at school resource deployment, materials selection, time allocating, and a host of other school management practices.

Needless to say, accountability has many facets, forms, and faces. It reaches far beyond the simplistic assertion that it is concerned with teachers and teaching. Learners and learning reach into some of these management and resource deployment decisions. When the student fails to learn, the entire system must be introspective. Accountability is the word symbolic of this needed ends and means introspection.

Measurable Educational Goals:
The Key to Making Accountability Operational

Educational goal setting is the prerequisite for measuring the distance between what is and what ought to be and in monitoring progress in getting to where we are going. Our goals must be stated in quantifiable terms. Broad, sweeping, and idealistic generalities will not do if we seek to measure ends and those means that may influence ends.

Although some goals in education will be difficult to quantify and respected authorities will differ on some priorities, there exists, it seems to me, a general consensus about many desired outcomes. This is represented in many almost universally accepted curricula found in schools across the nation.

What is needed, then, is more precision in describing desired outcomes as measurable objectives that comprise much (but not all) of the goal structure of our schools.

Educational goals, stated in quantifiable language, will provide the end we seek to attain. Surely, this is one step toward objectivity in education. Even if we lack agreement on some of the goals of education, there are far more about which there seems to be little dispute.

Learning as an Outcome and Student Performance as a Product:
Implications for School Management

After our goals have been stated with precision and after we have the quantifiable language describing our goals we step immediately into the input and output problem. We must, as I see it, conquer the frustrating problems on this battlefield if accountability is to mean more than a key word in a high sounding slogan.

When does a student's performance prove that he has attained a large educational goal? What factors or inputs helped -- and to what extent did they help the student to attain the goal? How do we measure student performance as a product of our schools?

As a people, we have grown up in a climate of science, where the scientific method is accorded the highest prestige. Since the beginning of this heavy emphasis on science, its practitioners have

been asserting with varying degrees of confidence the maxim, "anything that exists, exists in some amount, and consequently can be measured." In the educational world, the controversial element of the basic scientific assertion -- "and can be measured" -- continues to be a source of debate.

I suppose we would all concede that some students fail to learn even in the presence of excellent teachers and some students learn in spite of the ineptness of some obviously incompetent teachers.

To be trite, learning is difficult to quantify and measure. It is an even more perplexing task to identify what influences learning and what causes its fruition. Conversely, it is difficult to identify causes for learning failure.

From the student point of view, students claim -- with some bitterness at times -- that we are not consistent about accountability in education. They point out that teachers give exams to measure student learning in a given course. Letter grades are provided at the completion of most secondary school and college courses as a form of measurement of learning.

The grade point average determines such vital decisions as admission to graduate and professional schools, admission to certain prestige institutions, and entry to better jobs with large corporations.

Students see this attempt to measure and hold students accountable for learning as inconsistent with claims that teaching cannot be measured and, therefore, teachers cannot be held accountable for what students learn or fail to learn. Putting it in concrete terms, some students would ask: "If we place a 3.5 or a 1.2 grade point average label on a student, should we not be willing to do the same for the teacher?"

The foregoing identifies issues that have been discussed for a number of years. But today, educational accountability covers more substantive aspects of the business of teaching and learning. It is concerned with individually prescribed curricula and with making decisions on how and where to deploy scarce personnel and dollar resources to gain the maximum output. What materials, methods, media and staffing patterns will result in what educational ends? We have hard choices

to make and careful trade-offs to reckon with in educational administration. Many State Legislatures and the U.S. Congress are asking us for output measures, and we must account for results from dollars appropriated.

In the U.S. Office of Education, for example, the Secretary has put HEW agencies on a management by objectives system. He holds monthly management review sessions. He wants, for example, a detailed time phased action plan to show how 1.5 billion dollars in Title I of ESEA is going to buy some measurable progress in disadvantaged student accomplishment. The systems approach to laying out objectives and setting forth in dollars, personnel, and action strategy, the means for attaining goals is becoming a perplexing challenge in the U.S. Office of Education. We are, in short, being asked to regularly account for our stewardship. We cannot meet this challenge without more sophistication from the school systems of the nation in measuring student performance. Our sophisticated, scientific, production oriented society is demanding a more sophisticated, scientific and production oriented educational system. Accountability is the key word in all of this for it implies goal directed and performance oriented educational leadership. It implies analysis of feedback and correction of aim to more accurately focus on our targets.

We must, as I see it, readily concede that some of our most cherished educational outcomes will not be easily -- if ever -- stated and measured in quantifiable terms. Can we, for example, quantify such lofty human values as enthusiasm, love, loyalty, character, and empathy?

Schools surely want pupils to graduate from a passive state of mass acceptance to the more dynamic state of personal choice and decision.

Such achievement, which could be most influential to a pupil's future, is obviously difficult to quantify.

When we turn from student performance as a product to causative factors that contributed to the outcome, we have even more complex problems in measurement. After we measure the ends, identification of contributory means may be possible by varying the input and observing the impact on the output. Consideration, however, of the complex act of teaching tells us that this is not easy. Teaching is a combination

of inter-personal mix of unique characteristics of the subject matter, the teacher, the learner, and the emotional climate of the day. This last element should never be discounted. A 3:00 p.m. Friday afternoon class in January has a different emotional tone to it than a 7:00 a.m. summer school class. A class of 75 in a lecture hall has a different setting, obviously, than an eight-student seminar session in a small, enclosed basement room. On the college campus, an all-male student class in mathematics for engineers taught by a 60-year old female mathematics professor has a far different climate than a mixed class in sophomore English literature taught by a handsome, unmarried assistant professor -- particularly for the female students.

None of the foregoing is intended to offer anything new to this audience. It does, however, point up the complexity of attributing means to ends in learning.

We need to come to the task of finding out what works and what doesn't work after we have better mastery of measuring student performance as a product. To the extent that we can quantify our ends, education will become more objective and efficient because the manipulation of varying means will then be verifiable from the viewpoints of both educational adequacy and cost-benefit. This, it seems to me, is the beginning of educational equation making that will lead us away from so much of the guesswork and witchcrafting that still plagues school people.

In the Office of Education, we are often asked to describe in detail what works and does not work in educating disadvantaged and culturally deprived children. We have some reports of outstanding Title I projects. But we still fall short in the crucial task of meeting the needs of these youth because we have not been working the ends and means equations with the sophistication necessary to crank out some hard answers.

In a management by objectives system in education, the products are represented in student performance. Even if we admit that only some of the performance outcomes can be measured and that our yardstick will vary an inch or so because of other variables, we still must accept -- as I see it -- the proposition that such

quantification will give us the means to make some quite substantial strides toward objectivity.

And it is the lack of objectivity that causes guesswork in selecting materials and media and in deciding upon teaching and learning strategies. It is this very lack of objectivity that has caused educators to assume many things that are not so. This runs all the way from teacher-pupil ratio decisions to how best to teach reading in the primary grades.

Value Implications of the Principle of Accountability

Education must be managed by decision making processes that derive from objective information. In this quest for objectivity, we must realize that education must be humane. It must be people oriented. It must utilize democratic methods characteristic of the free society we seek to enhance.

The discipline and rigor of accountability must not lead us to a system that is authoritarian and threatening.

If accountability is used to make teachers feel insecure, the application of management by objectives may result in destructive tensions in an already tension laden education system. We must, as I see it, have an open, non-doctrinaire approach that persuades much and coerces little. Teaching prospers most in an atmosphere of participatory management.

We can surely have this and still operate under the banner of accountability. The strength of diversity and freedom that each school system or college department needs can actually be enhanced by less subjectivity.

As we look at the management side of education, I believe that most of us recognize that accountability will bring about better management of instruction. The management of instruction in most school systems and on most campuses is very weak and will remain feeble and ineffective until we can more accurately quantify inputs and outputs. It is my belief that this can be done without losing the essence of creative learning and creating bad side effects from too much systems theory, if we keep our democratic values in mind as we build our systems of accountability.

Conclusion:

I am reminded of my favorite definition of education as I consider how little I really know about this topic and how much I have had to say about it: "Education is the process of moving from cocksure ignorance to thoughtful uncertainty." As we approach our measurable objectives, we must be sufficiently thoughtful about the uncertainty of what is measurable. Let us build a broad framework, leaving proper latitude and respect for the creative intelligence of both the teacher and student. There is a place for some broadly derived, measurable outcomes, to be established and administered by democratic processes. The big challenge is to build accountability into the system without the all too easily attained bad side effects of rigidity and structuring that stifles creativity and initiative. To this end, we should set a sensible course toward more objectivity without such becoming an end in and of itself. Accountability can be the means toward more effective learning for youth and greater academic freedom for teachers. But this will not be so if accountability is established as the Orwellian big brother in education decision making.

The value system of our society must guide our viewpoint and total perspective of educational accountability. We must seek to avoid closed systems of input and output information. School staff members should look upon an educational accountability system as a complex feedback mechanism that is reinforcing. Accountability systems must be non-authoritarian and non-threatening. A democratic society demands this level of maturity and openness. Too much has been said and written about accountability as an instrument to nail down the incompetent and fix blame for failure. If these latter emerge from the system, they will be by-products of lesser significance than the prime purpose of bringing about vital information about decision making in the teaching and learning process.

ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTATION

I

Nolan Estes and Donald R. Waldrip

THEIR LIVES AND OUR CAREERS: ACCOUNTABILITY AS A FAIR TRADE IN EDUCATION

Future historians of education will probably be able to identify very precisely the origins of the drive for accountability. Speaking only for Dallas, I can say that it began with acute frustration.

For five years -- ever since the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act gave us the extra financial boost we needed to develop compensatory programs -- we had been trying all the old tricks and most of the new to improve achievement among those children whom we call the "culturally disadvantaged." Along with other school districts all over the country, we bought shiny new hardware and clever new software; invested in workshops and seminars for our teachers; sent our kids to concerts and museums and factories and even -- courtesy of Braniff Airlines -- up over the city in planes. In sum, we waved the banner of innovation as energetically as anyone.

Naturally, even though we got a considerable boost from Title I and other forms of federal aid, our costs went up. They tripled in the last 10 years -- mainly because of new construction, salary increases, and improvements such as air-conditioning; but

partially because we asked the citizens of Dallas to stretch federal dollars with their own. And when we totalled the results of this financial exertion on the part of the taxpayers, and of the spiritual exertion on the part of our teachers, we found we didn't have much to be proud of.

Our target had been those schools in which students were averaging only a half-year's achievement gain for every full scholastic year. By the time we finished, we had not managed to improve on this sad record; in fact, some of our Title I schools were worse off in 1970 than they had been in 1965.

Any sane school superintendent is reluctant to hang out his dirty linen for public viewing. I cannot suppress a certain sense of embarrassment even now, as I speak. All that gives me courage to do so is the knowledge that virtually every other large city school system in the country has had the same experience as Dallas. Five years and five billion dollars after Title I was passed, we still have not learned how to break the cycle of under-achievement that sees children from poor homes do poorly in school; find poor jobs or none; marry -- and then send their own poor children to school.

But though this failure remains constant, some things have changed in education -- notably the public attitude toward those who run it. Ten years ago, we educators confidently asserted that we knew how to cure educational illness. All we needed was enough money to lower pupil-teacher ratios, put a library in every school, an overhead projector in every classroom, and so on and so forth. Our prescriptions for educational excellence were based on traditional notions that went unchallenged because a stingy public had never allowed us to try them.

During the 1960's, we got a chance to try them; not as much of a chance as we would have liked, perhaps -- too many school systems spread Title I funds around so thinly that the extra money could not have any impact. Nevertheless, we were given a reasonable chance -- and the results did not justify the investment. And today, it is clear, the public does not believe it is getting its money's worth from public education.

Thus there is a public frustration as well as a professional frustration behind the drive for accountability. Public school systems have developed extremely precise methods of accounting; most of them can tell you to the penny how much they spent for teachers' salaries, textbooks, red and blue litmus paper, and the wax on the gymnasium floor.

But they cannot tell you what this investment produced. Our focus in educational accounting has been on input, not output. Professor Dwight Allen of the University of Massachusetts has quite properly criticized the accounting methods of school systems as being irrelevant for purposes of devising new educational strategy. Per-pupil expenditures do not really tell us what it costs to educate a student; all they tell us is what it costs to keep a student seated for a year.

A much more relevant measure, Dr. Allen argues, would be a "learning-unit" cost -- the total sum, including teacher's salary, portion of total building expense, cost of textbooks and other learning materials required to move a student from one skill-level in reading, writing, or math to the next highest level. These costs, moreover, would vary from one school to another; they would be higher in a school with a majority of children from low-income, black or Spanish-speaking families than they would be in a school with a majority of white children from upper-income homes.

Developing such a new accounting system would enable educators to show the public how much learning was produced by a certain amount of investment. It would, moreover, enable educators to shift resources back and forth within a budget -- testing, for example, the value of teacher-aides in one classroom against the value of educational technology in another and of programmed texts in a third. In each case, input would be related to output -- and educators who prescribed various teaching strategies would be held accountable for the results they produced.

Accountability is, in essence, a statement of policy. It states that educators will accept responsibility for their performance -- or lack of it. It implies that there is a contract between school personnel and the public, and that that contract involves

more than showing up for work on time. It accepts the fact that culturally different backgrounds make the task of educating more difficult, but it asserts that, as professionals, educators can overcome -- or will learn to overcome -- cultural difference.

Now statements of policy are fine things, if for no other reason than that they look nice framed on a wall. But if a statement of policy is to be a genuine program rather than just a fashionable enthusiasm, it must be translated into a strategy -- a set of practical steps for turning an idea into a reality.

Performance contracting is one such technique. It is not the only one. Voucher plans are another -- and so, indeed, is any systematic effort to relate educational effort to student achievement.

Our sense of frustration in Dallas led us to try performance contracting. Our interest in it led us to two distinct programs -- one financed by the Office of Economic Opportunity, and the other by Title I. I wish today to describe the Title I program because we controlled it from the start: chose the student population, outlined the performance criteria, wrote the request-for-proposals, defined the conditions under which any successful contractor would have to work, and negotiated the final contracts.

The entire process has been carefully monitored by the most precise scientific methods. According to our most recent figures, for example, every administrator involved has lost an average of 13.1 pounds, given up 46.3 percent of his weekends, and antagonized 75 percent of his wives to the point where 100 percent of them threatened to go home to mother an average of 3.4 times. Nevertheless, innovation marches on in Dallas.

First, a note on the OEO program. It involves about 600 students in grades one through three and seven through nine in two schools; these students are matched with another 600 in a control group. The subject areas are reading and mathematics, both of which were subcontracted by OEO to Quality Education Development, Inc., of Washington, D. C. Contracts for two service components, audit and management support -- I'll explain these terms a little later on -- were awarded by OEO to Batelle Memorial Institute and Education Turnkey Systems, Inc.

The two programs resemble each other in principle, of course; the major distinction is that OEO designed one program, Dallas the other -- hence I feel I can discuss the Dallas program with more authority.

First, the target group. Last May, we ran an analysis of underachieving high school students and selected a group whom, on the basis of our experience, we believed were highly susceptible to dropping out. By August 31, the first day of school, our predictions were proven unfortunately accurate: fully 50 percent did not show up. We divided the survivors into an experimental group of 960 and a control group of 700. The experimental group were all students in grades nine through twelve attending five Title I high schools.

We decided the program should concentrate on three kinds of instruction: first, basic skills -- communication and mathematics; second, occupational skills; and third, achievement motivation -- helping youngsters develop a determination to succeed.

The characteristics of both experimental and control groups are as follows: they were 4.8 standard scores below the national 50th percentile in reading, 6.2 scores below on vocabulary, and 4.9 scores below on mathematical skills. Their teachers and counselors indicated that each seemed to lack any desire to succeed in school, or any realistic goals in life.

When we set up this new shop, then, we chose to go after the toughest customers. Long before we picked them, however, we began thinking about the kind of program we would ask contractors to bid on. We started our planning in November 1969, with a Planning Advisory Group that comprised 30 people -- and I think it important to describe this group.

The membership included only five employees of the school district: two central staff administrators, a principal, and two teachers. The other 25 included the president of the Classroom Teachers of Dallas, which is the local NEA affiliate; seven students and ex-students; one school board member; and the rest, residents of the target neighborhoods, representatives of local colleges, local businessmen, and officials in Dallas civic agencies.

The cynical way to view this is that we were trying to minimize opposition -- and that, indeed, was one of the fringe benefits. Performance contracting seems by implication, at least, to impugn the competence of teachers, and one might expect their representatives to oppose it. But we are fortunate in Dallas to have NEA representatives who are equally alert to the interests of their members and to sound ideas for improving education. They agreed that performance contracting was a concept worth testing. Perhaps, they felt, it might be a step toward training teachers to aim for performance.

Yet minimizing opposition was not our principal objective in expanding the membership of the Planning Advisory Group. It is difficult for any educator to admit that laymen might know a thing or two about educating, but we decided to investigate the possibility.

Our humility paid off. Among many other benefits, it led us to include a somewhat offbeat course in the occupational training portion of our request-for-proposals: drafting for girls. That suggestion came from the businessmen on the advisory group -- and every girl enrolled in the drafting program has already been spoken for by a local industry.

By February 1970, the Planning Advisory Group had helped us develop a "wish-list": what we hoped the contractors could do for us. By April, we had refined that list into the RFP. We held a pre-bid conference in May, and chose the successful contractors in July.

Now -- what had we asked for in the RFP?

The total list of performance criteria and conditions is much too exhaustive to repeat here. The most important requirements -- those which, I believe, you will be interested in -- are these:

First, in mathematics and communications, the students would have to gain 1.4 grade-levels in one scholastic year -- in contrast to the 0.5 grade-levels this particular population had been gaining. Payment to the contractor would be based on individual student gains; unless every student achieved a 1.4-year gain, the contractor would not be able to recoup his costs.

Second, in achievement motivation, the contractor would have to reduce dropout rates below those of U.S.O.E.'s five most

successful Title VIII dropout prevention projects throughout the United States. The retention rates, however, would not be based on attendance in the achievement motivation classes -- since all a contractor would have to do to maintain high attendance would be to make these classes fun. Rather, measurement of the effectiveness of the achievement motivation classes would be based on attendance in the math and communications classes.

Third, with regard to occupational training, we could not define performance criteria as strictly as we could with the other two components. The essential test of occupational training is employability -- but this is affected by economic conditions as well as by educational excellence. However, we did the best we could to specify performance standards for this component by enlisting 25 local companies to work with the contractor; they participate not only in the actual training, but also in judging the quality of the program.

The New Century Company, a subsidiary of the Meredith Corporation, won the contracts for communications and math. Thiokol Corporation won the contracts for achievement motivation and occupational training. We also requested proposals for two other components: audit and management support.

Audit, essentially, is intended to keep everybody honest -- to prevent a repetition of the unfortunate experience in Texarkana. We wanted an outside agency to approve the tests given to experimental and control group students throughout the program; to check our research design so that we could appraise the effectiveness of various treatments, singly and in combination; to ascertain the reliability of data; and, finally, to certify the results so that the contractors could be properly compensated.

In contrast to the instructional components, which were contracted for on a penalty-incentive basis, the audit contract was for a fixed fee. We chose Educational Testing Service to provide the audit.

Management support, as the name implies, is to help out management -- in this case, the Dallas school system. Performance contracting is new to our staff; all of them have full-time duties,

and we did not want to divert them to an unfamiliar job. Hence we contracted with the Council of Great City Schools -- again for a fixed fee -- to provide a supplemental staff that would act as liaison between the school system, the contractors, and the auditor.

In addition, the Council of Great City Schools felt that placing a few of its representatives on our staff temporarily would increase their expertise in performance contracting. In a sense, even though their people have significant experience in this area, they would be serving an internship -- learning along with us so that they could later help other school systems.

The last aspect of performance contracting that I feel you should know about is the "turnkey" aspect. The three instructional components of our program -- math, communications, occupational training -- employ the contractors' methods and materials, but they employ Dallas personnel. We insisted on this in our RFP. Moreover, we insisted that the contractors' programs be so designed that they could be adopted throughout the school system if we elected to do so.

That is what "turnkey" means. Thus performance contracting can be viewed not only as a tool for improving student achievement, but as a tool for improving the effectiveness of teachers. Each contractor has agreed to train our teachers in his methods if those methods work. Each has also agreed to supply us with his real expense figures, so that we can appraise the cost-effectiveness of his program. We expect that each of them will make a profit; we've signed the contracts, and if they can deliver, we don't care how much each of them makes. But we do want to be able to compare their learning-unit costs against ours, so we can decide whether their methods can be extended to other students within our budget restrictions.

In connection with the "turnkey" aspect of the program, I venture the opinion that performance contracting poses no threat to any school district's teachers. But it does pose a threat to teacher-training institutions. If Thiokol or New Century or Jim-Dandy Educational Systems can teach teachers to teach potential dropouts to read, after all the tenured Ph.D.'s in our universities have so resoundingly failed -- then, I predict, we will see a lot of Ph.D.'s out of work during the next decade.

It is too early in our experiment to judge the results. We do know that our target population has a much higher attendance record than their controls; these youngsters whom we identified as probable dropouts -- probable, not possible -- are showing up 87 percent of the time.

This figure offers hope, but we are not resting too much on it. Like so many other promising ideas, performance contracting may fall flat on its face. In the meantime, however, we feel we've got hold of something that deserves a thorough, careful trial; that six months from now, or twelve or eighteen, we can go to the citizens of Dallas and say, "Here's where X amount of your dollars went, and here's the amount of difference which that investment produced. Now, how about giving us Y amount of additional dollars so we can produce that difference for Z number of additional kids?"

We feel we owe this to the citizens who are investing their taxes in the special knowledge which professional educators claim to possess. More important, we owe this to the parents who are investing their children in that special knowledge.

Most important of all, we owe it to the students, for they are investing themselves. Whether they know it or not, those children whom we term the "culturally disadvantaged" place most of their hopes for the future on the line when they enter our schools.

Accountability asks educators to place their careers on the line. Since our students had no choice of schools, but we had a choice of careers, this seems to me a fair trade.

ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTATION

II

Robert W. Locke

ACCOUNTABILITY YES, PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING MAYBE

To start with semantics:

1) By accountability, I mean the broad concept of establishing educational goals and looking at results.

2) By performance contracting, I mean the relatively narrow application of accountability, in which education companies get paid according to the achievements derived from their programs and services.

3) By project management, I refer to a less complex relationship in which companies provide the same programs and services, but for fixed fees.

My assignment is to discuss the problems of these various relationships between schools and companies, but I shall also consider the great potential of accountability as an operating concept for education.

Performance Contracting

Contrary to what you have read in the papers, I believe that most education companies look upon performance contracting as an undesirable way of doing business. For companies with carefully

researched programs and the competence to train teachers, it is not particularly risky because they know what kinds of results thay can achieve. However, it puts them in a straight jacket that makes performance contracting less desirable than the same work done under a simpler contract. The reason why certain companies, such as my own, have responded to the recent surge of RFP's is simply that they have the programs, they can provide the services, and they are willing to take the risk in order to get the business. A customer is a customer.

It is worth noting that many large and well-run companies have not sought to win performance contracts, either because they consider the risk too high or simply because they have reservations about their ability to perform the requisite services.

The companies that are willing to make performance contracts -- and perhaps all education companies -- would surely agree on these things:

1) That results in education cannot be guaranteed. In the fall and winter of Texarkana there were some misguided claims about programs that could "produce grade-level independent readers and writers by the end of the first grade" of some such, but virtually all companies understand that intellectual processes cannot be guaranteed in the way that soapmakers guarantee cleanliness.

2) They understand also the critical importance of having reliable data around which to construct contracts. More on this point later, but the lack of sufficient data is probably the main reason why some responsible companies have been reluctant to make performance contracts.

3) They also recognize that performance contracts make more sense for innovative programs than for conventional ones. It is hardly worthwhile, for either school districts or the companies, to write such

involved agreements merely for the purchase of textbooks. It makes much more sense for the installation of complex new systems of instruction for which the learning environment will have to be reorganized and the teaching staff retrained. This may be the chief value of performance contracting, because innovative instructional programs are very difficult to install and yet hold much promise for the improvement of education.

I suspect, in short, that the education companies have much the same general views of performance contracting as the school systems that wish to hire them.

But what do they worry about when sitting nervously across the bargaining table? I can't pretend to represent the position of any company except my own, but I suspect that most companies have much the same objectives.

1) Let's start with money and get that unpleasant subject out of the way. The nature of the relationship dictates that the companies price their performance bids higher than when selling their materials, equipment, and systems off the shelf. Performance contracts require extensive -- and expensive -- services that are normally performed by the school system itself. Foremost among them is teacher training. These services cost money, and they will cost more if provided by the companies than if provided by the schools themselves. (The companies generally pay better, and they will expect to get return on their costs.) Remember that this is basically a services contract because the materials and equipment can be purchased at catalog prices without the contract. The profit -- or lack thereof -- on the performance relationship depends on how much the contractor spends on services and in turn gets paid for them.

2) Nevertheless, I wouldn't get too uptight about the prospects of paying more money, because the theory of performance contracting is that educational results will be better. Remember that the only way a performance contract can cost less is to fail. Conversely, it will be relatively economical if it succeeds.

If the services provided, especially helping your teachers to use a new program effectively, are performed properly -- and if we jointly succeed in moving the achievement curve in the right direction -- the investment will produce a good return.

3) Companies will differ, incidentally, in how they construct their prices in performance contracts. The simplest model is to double the price of the materials and then accept no payment for any student who falls below a given objective -- say grade-level reading. The most sophisticated is to price the materials and services separately: the materials at their catalog prices and the services according to a matrix of learning objectives and achievement levels. The first strikes me as basically irresponsible because it smacks too much of the money-back guarantees offered for simpler products like soap -- and I would hate to see the education business sink to that level. The second is much more appropriate because it relates directly to the objectives of the program, the services that will be provided, and the performance of the students.

Besides money, what do the companies look for?

1) One has to do with the objectives of the program. The more carefully they have been developed and the more clearly they can be stated, the better. The companies do not want to develop objectives for the schools. Nor should they. Instead they would like

to do business with school systems that can determine performance objectives and state them in understandable terms.

2) Likewise, they want to do business with school districts that have a sophisticated understanding of evaluation. I hope it is becoming clear to all that the progress of individual students towards specified learning objectives cannot be effectively measured by tests that are normed to group performance. While recognizing the value of standardized achievement tests we must recognize also the crucial importance of developing criterion-referenced tests for the evaluation of individual progress. The lack of such tests poses a problem for performance contracts now underway or being negotiated. Until criterion-referenced tests are generally available we shall simply have to do the best we can with less appropriate measures of performance.

3) In quite a different area, we are interested in what part the school's regular teaching staff will have in the project. The more the better. Quite frankly, I doubt if many companies are interested in proving that <u>they</u> can do a better job of teaching your children to read than your own teachers can. And obviously it would accomplish very little for education in general if that were the only outcome of performance contracting.

Instead, we would like to help your teachers do a more effective job of teaching reading, or whatever, using our materials and learning systems.

For Mr. Shanker's benefit, we have no intention of participating in an effort to by-pass union contracts; nor do I see any way in which that can possibly benefit the schools.

4) We are also interested in the school's plans to work with the community, and especially the parents of the children in the program. This is especially important in the black community, as in both Washington and Los Angeles; and in the brown community as in Los Angeles. It is an activity in which the companies can help and perhaps a good way of justifying their PR departments.

5) Finally, we are greatly concerned about the length of the commitment. Fundamental changes in the process of teaching and learning are not likely to be made quickly, and short-term performance contracts are not the way to bring them about. This is a serious concern because many of the projects have been short-term and there has been created the false expectation that an education company can set up, operate, and leave in good working order a new instructional system, all within the space of a year. Such a program can undoubtedly produce good results within that year, but it stands to reason that a longer commitment is needed and that the company should not be absolved of its responsibilities at the end of a year.

These, it seems to me, are the main concerns that any contractor will have, and I hope they respond intelligently to the needs of the schools.

Project Management

Let me point out that schools can buy the same programs and services from the education companies without the complications of performance contracts. In fact, they can specify exactly the same objectives and ask for the same services, but negotiate contracts for a system of fixed fees. This means giving up the sliding scale feature that may have some potitical sex appeal, but it is much simpler and should produce equally good results at the same or less cost.

Texarkana

Before turning to some broader concerns about accountability, and at the risk of stepping on some toes, I should perhaps say something about Texarkana.

1) It was naive to award that contract to a company that did not have a complete and well-tested program.

2) The blame for that error in judgment must be shared, I suspect, by the two school districts, by the Office of Education, and by the consulting firm that helped to construct the program.

3) The monitoring arrangements were obviously inadequate. It is ironic that it took a student to discover that test items had been written into the program.

4) We should be clear about the difference between teaching to the test and literally teaching the test. The former is done, at least subconsciously, by most teachers, and a case can be made that it is educationally sound. Writing test items into the program, on the other hand, is probably not educationally sound. It was certainly not ethical. And just incidentally it was probably a case of copyright violation.

5) But the greatest shame of Texarkana was that the first and most visible experiment in performance contracting was so seriously flawed.

I might add that a division of McGraw-Hill, Educational Developmental Laboratories, has been awarded the second year of the Texarkana program and now has the challenge of doing the job properly. We expect to do so.

Accountability

It must be obvious by now that my view of performance contracting is somewhat ambivalent. However, I have no ambivalence about the concept of educational accountability. I believe that we

simply must pursue the concept for the potential good that underlies it.

1) It strongly supports educational innovation, and in a sound, practical way.

2) It requires a focus on the goals of education, and on the matching goals of instructional materials and systems.

3) Perhaps most important, it puts the emphasis on the processes of teaching and learning, by considering what individual children already know, what they need to learn, how best they can learn, and how their progress can be measured.

But there are some large issues to resolve, and we are a long way from having the answers to all of the thoughtful questions that are being raised about accountability in education.

Will Industry Help?

As those questions get raised, can the education business be counted upon to help answer them in the public interest?

Representative Edith Green has expressed concern about the dangers of an education-industry complex, and I think her concern is legitimate. There are potential dangers in the complex relationships that are developing between schools, federal and state governments, and corporations of all sizes. Furthermore, since the education business is only the private sector of a public enterprise, it would be irresponsible for the public not to be concerned.

But let's make sure that the relationships develop in such a fashion that the public interest is served.

What we need most of all is a set of standards for the work done by industry -- and also by the not-for-profit educational organizations like ETS. It should be neither a fatuous code of ethics such as proposed some years ago by the project ARISTOTLE people, nor an overly precise set of specifications like the school

building codes that in many states have limited innovation in school architecture.

Rather, it should be a well-reasoned set of minimum standards for the ways in which things should be done:

1) The extent to which instructional materials should be field-tested, for instance.

2) What kinds of technical data should be provided when new programs are put on the market.

3) To what extent the supplier should monitor the installation of his program.

4) And how programs should be evaluated.

In other words, how the process should be carried out.

I do not believe that proper standards of this sort would inhibit the work of the companies or the development of their relations with the schools. Instead they would codify what both the companies and the schools already know should be done, and what the best of them are attempting to do.

And it may in the end help to make accountability a fundamentally important development in education, and not just the latest in a series of panaceas.

POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Albert Shanker

I think the first thing that needs to be said about accountability from the point of view of the teacher is that the concept is very much feared. It is feared because accountability in its recent thrust to prominence has had at least three separate meanings.

The first meaning is associated with the schools where the parents say, "You, the teachers, are paid to teach. Our children have been going to school year after year and they are falling further and further behind. We demand that you be accountable to us. If the children don't learn we demand the right to remove you." So, in the first sense, accountability views the teacher as a hired hand, or a hired mind -- or both -- of a group of parents. Thus, accountability essentially means the right of that group to pick and choose, to retain or get rid of those whom it wants to; whether on the basis of adequate or inadequate information, knowledge, or judgment.

The second meaning derives from the great desire to control educational expenditures. How is the school accounting for the dollars that we are spending for education? How do we know we are getting our money's worth?

The third meaning of accountability deals with the development of professional standards. For example, there is a body of agreement in other fields, such as medicine and law, as to what constitutes competence and incompetence.

The fears of teachers, then, are dependent upon which of these three meanings is used in a given accountability effort, and the manner in which the objective associated with that meaning is achieved.

Teachers are also deeply concerned about the concept of innovation, which is so frequently associated with accountability. They have learned through years of experience -- and rather bitter experience -- that educational innovation in the American public schools has nothing to do with the improvement of education.

It is, instead, a kind of public relations device whereby the reigning political power -- whether it's a school board, or the principal or school superintendent trying to convince the community that he or she is a bright, shiny individual doing all sorts of new and creative things -- brings out all kinds of ideas which force teachers and children and others to march in different directions. A year later, that lot are dropped as a new set of innovations are produced like rabbits from a hat. These innovations, rather than being honest attempts at educational improvement, are really public relations efforts.

Further, there is a great discrepancy between, on the one hand, the educational change and innovation expected by the educational establishment and the New Left critics, and, on the other hand, what is actually expected from teachers in the classroom. Namely, that the teachers are expected to maintain a rather high degree of order in a rather unusual situation. That is, you place 30 youngsters in their seats at 8:30 a.m., and the teacher's prime responsibility is to keep them relatively quiet, relatively immobile for a long period of time.

Research has shown that this expected degree of order is based on a series of sanctions which the teacher has developed. And the students, in turn, have developed understandings with the teacher. They know, for example, that if they are not too disruptive, if they whisper quietly, the teacher will agree to ignore them, to withhold

the sanction. Such a relationship can only be maintained if there is a relative amount of stability and continuity in what goes on in the classroom.

Unfortunately, change and innovation upset these understandings, with an ensuing risk of chaos and disruption in the school. We must remember that when an observer -- be he parent, principal, or school board member -- walks through the school, he rarely notices the wonderful innovations. But he's sure to notice how many kids are yelling and running around! It will not then be a satisfactory answer to say, "I was trying to innovate today, but it didn't work out. The kids didn't quite understand."

So, the teacher risks something with innovation. He risks those very understandings and relationships which tend to maintain the orderliness and quietness that parents seem to want.

Teachers are also disturbed by the frequent association of accountability with something called "teacher motivation," a doctrine which holds that many teachers fail to reach the children because they don't really want to. These teachers are accused of just being job holders -- not really trying and not really wanting to do anything productive. Hence the calls for an individual system of punishments and rewards, geared to the children's progress.

This view of accountability poses a great threat, because, to be honest, most teachers aren't doing the best they can. And for a very simple reason: they don't know any other way of doing things. They are the victims, if you like, of a system that has seen eight thousand new teachers move into New York, for example, every year for the past twenty years. These new teachers, drawn from many different colleges and universities, are a remarkably diverse group: Catholics and Protestants, Jews and nonbelievers, blacks and whites, liberals and conservatives. Yet, after four weeks of teaching in New York City it is almost impossible to distinguish the newcomers from those they replaced. Which leads to a rather obvious conclusion: With the exception of the few outstanding figures who somehow operate on an individual basis, the overwhelming majority of teachers do what the school as a system compels them to do.

In these circumstances, it obviously makes little sense to talk in terms of individual rewards and punishments. So it is a threat to say you are going to apply individual rewards and punishments when the individual has no freedom to change his ways. It is exactly for this reason that writers like Holt, Goodman, and others are rejected by teachers. They are rejected because of the arrogance of the writing. Essentially, these New Left critics are behaving like a star of the Metropolitan Opera who criticizes his audience for being unable to sing as well as he does. Many of these books are written by self-proclaimed star performers for no other purpose than to say, "Look at all those lowly characters out there who are not as artistic as I am!" That, of course, is not very helpful to the ordinary practitioner.

Another difficulty with accountability lies in our present failure to use such knowledge as we already possess in a few vital areas. I will cite just two examples. The first concerns the findings of Benjamin Bloom, and others, that a major part of intellectual development occurs between the ages of two and five. Despite almost universal agreement on this point, there is practically no movement on the part of government -- federal, state, or local -- to develop an education program at that level. The second example concerns junior high schools. We've had junior high schools for about fifty years, yet it is tragic to reflect that, even today, ninety-nine percent of the students who enter junior high school without knowing how to read, write, or count, leave in the same plight. School, for one of these youngsters, represents a context of failure, and in consequence, he does one of two things: He either drops out internally by just sitting in the back of the room, and will leave you alone if you leave him alone; or, he lashes out and becomes the violent and disruptive youngster that we see every day. This we know only too well, but over all these years nothing has been done to create an alternative model of education for such youngsters to identify with. We know, but we do not act.

With all these problems arrayed against it, how does one get teachers to accept this odd notion of accountability? To begin

with, the first two conceptions of accountability that I mentioned must be firmly opposed. I think it is quite clear that teachers are going to reject the notion that they are just hired hands. Secondly, they are not overly concerned with arguments about budgets. Teachers will react negatively to statements that they must change their ways either because few or many dollars are being spent.

The third concept of accountability as being the development, with other groups, of common objectives is, I believe, acceptable to teachers, because strictly speaking it is not for teachers alone to determine what the objectives of education are. Nor are teachers as intractable on the subject as might be supposed, for they have already moved in this direction. In June 1969, the United Federation of Teachers in New York City became, I believe, the first organization in the country with a contract clause stating that the Federation and the Board of Education would work together to develop objective standards of professional accountability, in cooperation with parent groups, community boards, universities, and other interested parties. There have been a number of meetings to this end, and, believe it or not, these groups which had been on opposite sides of the barricade in 1968 -- and which are still not friendly to each other -- these same groups reached unanimous agreement on what they wanted.

The proposal has two parts. The first follows a management-by-objectives approach, with teachers, parents, students, community boards, the Board of Education, and supervisors at all levels developing agreed-upon objectives. Objectives which are not so narrow as to turn children into machines, but also not so broad as to make measurement impossible.

The second part of the program is perhaps the largest research design ever put together. Its aim will be to identify the districts within the city, the schools, the programs, the materials -- the individual, even -- that are doing something to reach the objectives. And, more important perhaps, it will also try to identify the factors which have nothing to do with the objectives, which are neutral; and those which are dysfunctional. This part of the program will include

social, family, economic, and educational information in a form unlike anything seen hitherto.

The ambitious, far-reaching nature of this proposal suggests an important principle that is, perhaps, not too well understood as yet. But we must all come to understand it, eventually, if we are to make any progress with accountability. Simply stated, the principle is this: Where accountability is concerned, no man is an island.

Teachers do not work in a vacuum, a controlled environment with all random factors controlled. So it is impossible to develop a design that will tell you what the teacher should be doing, or which practices are good and which bad, without considering those random factors, or outside influences, that limit the performance of even the best of teachers. The individual student, his family, his socioeconomic background, and the school system itself, must all be held accountable in degrees yet to be determined for everyone involved.

When this principle is clearly understood and freely accepted it will be easier for teachers to believe that a system of professional accountability does not, necessarily, imply an individual threat. For the inevitable effect of such a system will be changes in the structure of the school and of the school system in which it operates. Changes that will break the vicious circle in which each year, for twenty years, those eight thousand new teachers have found themselves. Changes that will bring about change. Simultaneously, large numbers of teachers will be persuaded to behave differently, because different demands will be placed on them.

Another by-product of a comprehensive system of accountability that is attractive to teachers will be a greater sharing of ideas. Very little has been done at the teacher level to create a bank of successful techniques. It's not be denied, of course, that we have grandiose schemes, master-of-arts degrees in teaching, and lengthy courses. But these are all a bit removed from the firing line, and, in consequence, we never hear of -- or from -- the teacher out there, somewhere. The teacher who, ordinary enough most of the time, proves to be absolutely brilliant for just three lessons a year. Three lessons in which she develops certain concepts better than anyone

else. I'd like to hear from her, and so would most other teachers. To develop better systems than we now have, we must pull together what is known out there -- and use it.

This suggests, of course, that an essential part of any system of professional accountability is the development of a model of what constitutes competent practice. Competent practice is not necessarily related to some particular performance result. It would be unwise to evaluate a doctor, for example, on the basis of the number of patients who die while in his care. If the doctor concerned is a cancer specialist -- but the difficulty is obvious. Here the question of competent practice may have more to do with whether he prolonged life for a time, or relieved pain.

So what is missing in our field of education, and must be developed in conjunction with the accountability movement, is a model of what a competent practitioner does when faced with a particular set of problems.

Speaking of problems brings to mind some that exist with three currently popular ideas. These ideas -- vouchers, performance contracting, and school decentralization -- all seem to possess either basic flaws in the reasoning that promotes them, or in the manner in which they are being promoted. Hitherto, I have been talking about accountability mainly in connection with its impact on, and concerns for, one segment of the educational community -- teachers. But the three ideas that I've just mentioned should be of concern to all of us, because they can be serious obstacles to the development of a true accountability system.

First, vouchers; which are being proposed as a national answer to providing accountability by offering a choice to the consumer -- the student or his parents. It might be more accurate to say "the semblance of choice," because no one seems to have considered the implications of a nationwide voucher system. So let us consider them, and to make things a little simpler we won't talk about the whole country, just New York City -- much simpler.

Let's suppose that just 50% of the students decided they would go to private or parochial schools in the future. That's a small matter

of 600,000 youngsters. Their decision would set off a chain of events, resembling nothing more than a child's game of "Ring Around the Rosie." With the public schools half-empty, half the teachers would be fired. Neighboring schools would be consolidated for efficiency and economy. Surplus buildings would be closed. The private institutions, besieged by 600,000 youngsters waving vouchers, would urgently need buildings, teachers, textbooks, and materials. And the only readily-available source of buildings, of 30,000 needed teachers, would be those closed public schools and surplus teachers who are out looking for jobs. We have come full circle: The same children, in the same schools, with the same teachers. The great innovative voucher program has accomplished only one thing -- it has removed responsibility from the government, because the schools are now private, not public.

Those who would drastically limit the scope of a voucher program in order to avoid these problems must necessarily turn the program into one available only to the elite few -- a program hardly worthy of national debate and national support.

So much for vouchers. On performance contracting I want to start with the statement that, in a field as complex as education, there can be no guarantee of performance. The position is similar to that in other complex fields: a doctor or a lawyer cannot guarantee performance. If they did, they'd run the risk of being jailed as quacks. Perhaps those who purport to guarantee performance in education should also be jailed for quackery.

The second problem with performance contracting was foreshadowed by my call earlier for a model of what constitutes competent practice. Performance contracting moves us away from real accountability, away from analysis of what a competent practitioner should be doing, to consideration of a specific end product -- away from the process which the competent practitioner engages in to the product, which depends on many factors not within the control of teachers or schools.

The next argument against performance contracting is that it seems to oversell an underdeveloped technology. I recommend to you a

very fine book by Anthony Oettinger. "Run Computer Run" is a thorough analysis of the state of educational technology today. Like Dr. Oettinger, I am hopeful that eventually we shall acquire very sophisticated technology. I am not against technology, we need it, and we should develop it.

But I am opposed to the manner in which the technology of performance contracting is being promoted. Performance contractors are behaving and talking as if a technological answer to all problems is already available. It isn't, and these companies should admit that they are trying to develop such a technology and need the children in today's schools to do it. That it is only a try, and not a cure for today's ills. Anything less than such frankness smacks of deception.

My fourth objection concerns the special motivational devices featured in most performance contracting programs. Radios, baseball bats, and green stamps are among the goodies being used. I'm not all that "holier than thou" about such things. I tell my son that if his report improves, he can have a new bike. We all use this approach, and there's no question that such rewards play an important role in our family life and our society. So we can't say that rewards must never be used, but we must ask some serious questions -- because no one else seems to be doing so.

What happens to the student after he leaves the motivated, reward-oriented climate of the performance contract classroom and returns to a regular class? Does he refuse to learn? Does he fail to learn? Does the use of motivation in one room -- which is not available to teachers elsewhere -- create learning in one place and destroy it in another? And what happens next year, when the motivational goodies are withdrawn? I don't know the answer to these questions, and I suspect that no one else does, either. And because we don't know the answers, it is incumbent upon anyone who uses this type of reward system to build an analysis of it into the research design for his program.

Finally on performance contracting, I suggest a case of false packaging. I've already touched on the impossibility of guaranteeing a specified result, or level of performance. We are, of course, confronted with suggestions that this can and will be done. But what

we are actually presented with is a non-guarantee. That is, it's not the student's performance that is guaranteed, but the contractor's payment that is not guaranteed.

We have even been oversold on the idea that the contractor doesn't get paid if the student fails. That just isn't true in the overwhelming majority of contracts. In fact, the contractor receives a succession of payments: When he signs; when he moves the hardware in; again at the halfway point; leaving only a fairly limited amount which he does not get if the children fail to succeed. In addition, many contracts absolve the company from responsibility for youngsters who fail to show up for the program a certain number of times -- usually fairly small. So it is that we have in the Bronx a program with a tremendous amount of absenteeism, and the company stands to collect on the very students for whom the program was designed.

So the company gets paid a good amount whether or not there are results; it gets paid for the truants and dropouts; and it can also profit from a well-known characteristic of the standardized tests so commonly used today. I refer, of course, to errors of measurement. The simple fact is that if you tested a group of students today and again one month hence -- having given them a vacation -- 25% of that group would make, or appear to make, one whole year's progress in that short month of vacation. If you paid the company for that group and repeated the cycle, at the end of another month the company would again be eligible for payment on another 25% of the remaining students. Non-guaranteed payments begin to look more like a mirage, I think.

I won't spend any time on the third obstacle to accountability -- school decentralization. You all know what is suggested, and I am more concerned with calling attention to what seems to lie behind these three proposals: abdication, or evasion, of responsibility -- or should I say, accountability -- by the U.S. Government.

In the last decade, we have seen parents, teachers, administrators, labor unions, and civil rights groups marching on Washington to demand more money for education. Last year, the President suffered two major defeats when his education vetoes were overriden.

The pressures are obvious and insistent, and the Administration is seeking ways to silence these clamoring voices. So I think these three proposals represent a national strategy for reducing the accountability of the U.S. Government to our school systems, our parents, and our students. In each case, when the voices cry, "Our children are still not learning," as well they may, the Government will have a set of ready-made answers available. "You decided on the school; choose another if you don't like it." Or, "So get another performance contractor." And, of course, "It's your Board of Education; you elected them. Elect another lot."

In all, a strategy to reduce accountability by creating a phoney image of consumer choice.

In reality, a strategy designed to take a major American institution, which has led to a good deal of social mobility and equality of opportunity, and to throw it away on a series of political gimmicks. These gimmicks should be rejected, for unlike many educational experiments which can be tried and, if they fail, be rejected -- these experiments which reduce the commitment of government to education and which move the schools from the public to the private sector are, like experiments with hard drugs, irreversible. Our public schools, with all their faults, are worth keeping, and their improvement will come not from gimmicks but from the same type of slow, painful, unrestricted, free, scientific inquiry that brought other areas of human concern into the modern world.

PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

I

Wilson C. Riles

A Gallup Poll in 1970 found that 67 percent of the people contacted believed teachers and school administrators should be held more accountable for the progress of their students. In the rise and fall of fads, this percentage should increase for some time to come as word gets around about the "magic" of accountability. Following much more slowly will be the practice and fact of accountability, and hopefully by the time the public switches tracks to another destination, accountability will have settled permanently into our school system as a common-sense measure without the guise of a panacea.

Perhaps it takes these public exigencies to spur needed change in the education profession. The profession has the peculiar quality of being able to reform others without being able to reform itself. All the public is asking, after all, is the same high standards of responsibility with the public monies that they demand in the management of their own private affairs.

The source of the current interest in accountability is fairly well known: school needs have outrun school funds, priorities are having to be set, and the public is no longer satisfied with allocations that do not clearly reflect the priorities. The

public feels that with school budgets, as with their private budgets, there ought to be reason and priorities, the expenditures should be balanced, and you should have "something to show" at the end of the process. Moreover, wherever possible the factors involved should be reduced to cold hard facts -- just as with the space program, just as when an individual buys an automobile or makes a business investment. No emotion, no poetry, just cold hard facts.

Whether the analogies are directly transferable to education or not may not be as important as whether the public thinks they are transferable. Because the public's belief in the similarities between running a business and running a school may become the public's expectations in accountability, those expectations may be what educators will have to contend with most.

In my own state there are growing demands for regular evaluation of teacher performance with a prepared check-off list. There are editorials proposing to quantify everything from the bus driver's free time to student attitudes in art. And there are people wanting to reduce all values to a square-foot or a cent by cent expenditure. The reaction of the profession, it seems to me, can be one of resistance and counterclaim; which I don't think is really a plausible reaction at all. Or it can be one of greeting the new interest as a welcome enthusiasm for progress, with an invitation to the public to help implement the precepts. This, of course, is the position I think the education profession should take. Indeed, I cannot imagine how accountability would work otherwise. Accountability is essentially a partnership venture.

I believe the public's expectations for accountability -- whatever they may be -- should be meshed with the public's participation in the accountability process. If this occurs, then for once the hopes and the facts would be the same. Let me be specific.

I view accountability as a process of setting goals, making available adequate resources to meet those goals, and conducting regular evaluations to determine if the goals are met. Fundamental to this process is that there exist an adequate "data bank" of information from which viable options can be determined. The

researchers and the state departments of education should provide this. From the available options, then, goals can be determined.

In the goal-setting stage, the broadest possible spectrum of the community should be brought together to make the decisions. The process should be comprehensive and cohesive, involving students, parents, teachers, administrators, boards of education, legislators, and the public at large. Once goals have been set, the necessary resources can be allocated. The public will know what is needed from the data bank. They also will know if they do not allocate the amount needed, then it is unfair to expect the schools to meet the assigned goals later.

Finally, there's evaluation -- comprehensive, in depth, and accurate. This cannot be a one-score test evaluation, but must be an ongoing, regular evaluation that is diagnostic as well as comparative, that accounts for process as well as product, and that is principally geared toward improving instruction for the individual student. Moreover, the evaluation results should be translated into terms that are clear and easily understood by the lay public. A regular "state of education" message would seem to be a must, and the terminology used should be such that the options available to the public are clearly laid out. Then the accountability process can begin again.

The thrust of this accountability system would be that the taxpayer is never asked to support inefficient schools, and that the people have a regular meaningful assessment of the quality of education in their communities. If the people have participated in establishing the goals and have a significant voice in the assessment, then there is a higher chance that their expectations will be geared into reality. Otherwise, with only an outside knowledge of education, I see no reason why the public shouldn't expect accountability to recast our schools into slide-rule perfection. If the latter persuasion takes sway, we can expect some awkward moments.

Right now in Los Angeles, serious thought is being given to decentralizing the city district into a dozen mini-districts. The reason is that many people feel lo[illegible] schools should be made

more responsive -- and hence accountable -- to residents. But at the same time, and for the same reason, the Governor's Commission on Educational Reform is proposing that California abolish the 58 county superintendent positions in favor of 15 state department of education regional offices. The problem is, no one has clearly determined the influence of district size on efficiency. I know of small inefficient districts as well as small efficient ones. We still are operating largely on hunches.

Accountability, too, if improperly handled, can bring some self-defeating results when paired with the public expectations. Administratively, the bookkeeping could be overwhelming with ineffectiveness that could pique the public anger. Or anger might come from the presence of outside research teams at the local school, evaluating the neighborhood's children. There's a very strong possibility a parent may want rigorous accountability standards used on every child but his own. Or that accountability results will be used more for comparative than diagnostic purposes. This is the case now with California's statewide testing system. It serves more as fodder in political and legislative wrestling matches than it does as a source of improved instruction for the child.

No doubt accountability does lend itself to becoming a battlefield for the "experts." Facts and counterfacts always seem to be in plentiful supply, and everyone can garner up an arsenal of experts to authenticate his case. Too, the critical process of interpreting raw data to the public is particularly susceptible to distortion, and it is the rare reporter or administrator who can penetrate into the mysterious and protected reserve of the statistician.

Politically, of course, there is a danger that school board elections might be won or lost on the basis of approximations and estimates, when in fact the figures may be generalities at best. Or legally, there may be these questions: How much power can be farmed out to private performance contracting groups; do those groups have to use state-certified personnel; who is liable for quotas set but not met?

Educationally, there may be fears of a new rigidity introduced into the system, particularly if everything is quantified and we have a series of "five-year plans." With accountability as the byword, there may be some tendency to discourage courses that don't lend themselves so readily to quantifiable measures; or to discourage services -- such as counseling or health -- that may not have quantifiably ascertainable results. And finally, in our rush for certitude, we might snuff out those variables in education that make for human creativity and imagination.

These possibilities are some of the reasons why I believe that if the public is not brought in on the process, they will hammer at it from the outside and eventually establish procedures devoid of the input of the profession. I do not believe, for instance, that someone who is brought into the evaluating process will demand that all values be reduced to numbers. Nor, to the contrary, will they any longer claim that no values can be reduced to numbers. Instead, I believe they will understand that some things can be quantified and that others cannot; and that those things that can be quantified should be quantified so that those things that cannot will have greater play.

Creativity and innovation are challenged today more by inefficiency and lack of direction than they are by systems analysis. Freedom is a function of your options, and today our options are precious few. Far from engineering man out of education, I believe accountability is an attempt to bring man back in. What we have been squeezed out by is our own ineptitude and archaic methods that have kept us so busy we haven't had time to be human.

Thus, in summary, it seems to me our principal task is not to fret about whether the Gallup Poll registers a rise or decline in public expectations about accountability, but rather we should get busy working directly with the public to make accountability a functioning process for improving quality in our schools. Then the expectations will more likely approach what is truly possible.

PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

II

H. Thomas James

Popular concern about the performance of educational institutions is not a new phenomenon. One could perhaps explore the concern of the French government early in the last century over the rapid rise of Prussia as a powerful national and industrial state, the French decision to employ Victor Cousin to study the Prussian education system, and the subsequent transformations of French and American educational institutions traceable to that model. There are also local illustrations, such as the discontent in Quincy, Massachusetts, which led to the school committee's decision in 1876 to conduct the general testing of the school children themselves, and to the subsequent revolutionary reorganization of that school system that brought over 30,000 people to Quincy in a subsequent three-year period to view the remarkable results. I'm sure other historical illustrations can be suggested as examples of the classic pattern of political storms gathering about educational institutions which led to reforms, such as those experienced in many big city school systems around the turn of the century. Again late in the 1930's, concern was in the air and reforms were in the making but aborted, perhaps because of the distractions and dislocations of

World War II, thus leaving serious problems still to be resolved through more extensive reforms than have yet been attempted.

The first surfacing of a truly national concern about conditions that have led to the present state of crisis in American education appears to me to have occurred in a meeting of educators in 1946 that included James B. Conant and Roy E. Larsen, which led to the establishment of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools. The Commission (later Council) promoted citizens support of local schools, and citizen interest in programs and problems of the schools, without taking issues on such professional matters as curriculum and methods of teaching. Its existence, activities, and support provided state and local forums, and frameworks for discussion, that were enormously helpful in aggregating demands arising out of discontent with schools and in shaping a strong political drive for funds to support the costs of rising school enrollments following World War II. The public relations approach that they used during the 1950's taught teacher associations a lesson useful to their purposes that has helped maintain their sophisticated efforts for support of schools long after the Commission's major effort ended.

The Ford Foundation's Fund for Education, which supported the Commission, moved on from the Commission's essentially public relations approach to problems created by rising enrollments, and began focusing attention on qualitative problems related to curriculum, teaching methods, and administration, and laid the groundwork for much of the governmental efforts that followed through the National Defense Education Act, the National Science Foundation, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the latter marking the first serious congressional effort to compensate for racial and religious discrimination in state and local administration of schools. Other voluntary efforts, including Educational Testing Service, and the Education Commission of the States, which is now administering the national assessment of education, have added substantial capabilities for diagnosing the current ills and perhaps have aided in shifting attention from fiscal problems, administrative

organization, curriculum, and teacher training, to where the deepest popular concern has always been, namely, with the effect of the school on the individual child. The widespread interest in the current spate of apocalyptic writers, who advocate destruction of the school as we know it, may signal a popular readiness to consider more fundamental efforts to improve the schools than anything we have seen since the Quincy New Departure.

The popular uneasiness about the schools is further evidenced in the wide acceptance of certain terms, such as "Johnny can't read" in the 1950's, "the pursuit of excellence" in the 1960's, and most recently, "accountability," a term Leon Lessinger popularized that has since appeared often in Presidential and other political references to education. Because of its popularity, and the new meanings being read into accountability in the last year or so, many individuals and organizations are seeking ways to deal with it.

I will make a brief attempt in the next few paragraphs to explore what definitions I have been able to find for the term "accountability" and then express what I can discern of the appeal each has for the public in the educational context of today. I will make no effort to define what Leon Lessinger meant by it, because I am sure from observing him over the years that he, like the Queen in Alice in Wonderland, used the term to mean exactly what he intended it to mean, no more and no less. I am sure, also from observation, that his intentions vary from time to time, as also, no doubt, do those of politicians using the term.

In summary there appear to be at least six general categories of meaning related to accountability as follows:

1. Attributable, the assignment of cause, placement of blame, accounting for, as in sources of change, fixing of responsibility.

2. Predictable, divineable, calculable, accountable in the sense that a contract makes some part of the future foretellable, anticipatable, foreknowable, promised.

3. Intelligible, comprehensible, discoverable, understandable, fathomable, conceivable, accountable in the sense of being easily understood, unequivocal, unambiguous, unconfused, "in plain English."

4. Explainable, interpretable, deducible, capable of being inferred, describable, definable, translatable, demonstrable.

5. Liable, answerable for blame, bound to duty, unexempt from responsibility, answerable for obligations.

6. Subject to audit, taking of inventory, balancing of accounts, "be checked up on," have books examined, be verified, particularly from the standpoint of being economical, thrifty, prudent, provident, and demonstrating good management or stewardship.

As these meanings associated with accountability are examined, and doubtless as others will emerge as we study it, one begins to see why the term "accountability" has caught on so quickly and appealed so broadly. For the perennial critics of the schools, it provides a convenient shorthand to summarize all of the major charges they have leveled at schoolmen over the years as irresponsible, unpredictable, incomprehensible in the "bafflegab" or "educationese" they speak, incapable of either explaining or demonstrating what they are doing, never held liable for their failures, and at schools as improvident, and badly managed. The term appeals also to the parent who would like to fix responsibility for his child's education, anticipate his progress, understand what his teachers are talking about, have them explain and demonstrate what they do and what the parent can do to help, know that teachers are committed to their obligations and will be answerable for blame when it is deserved, and finally that the whole operation be audited, both as to the fiscal as well as to the educational record.

Yet from the standpoint of the school administrator, as the responsible head of the school, he's left virtually defenseless in all categories except the sixth, and these can depend only on his records of fiscal management, which are badly in need of extensive

reorganization (a subject I hope we can explore in due time, for here, at least, is an area where the Chief State School Officers, AASA, ASBO, NEA, and the Office of Education, among others, have demonstrated in each of the past six decades a willingness to cooperate). The results of the teaching act are measured over long periods of time in which many teachers are involved with a given child, and the assignment of cause for an individual failure among such diffuse contributions is virtually impossible under existing arrangements for schooling. Despite studies such as Benjamin Bloom's that argue the feasibility, few teachers willingly predict a child's future performance in school or elsewhere, nor will they normally agree to guarantee performance levels. The typical superintendent rarely can admit to understanding all his teachers, let alone guarantee that they will understand each other, or be understood by the public. As for explaining or demonstrating what goes on in a classroom, teachers, like churchmen, find mystique more helpful. The question of liability rarely arises, for the contractual responsibilities are not specified in terms other than being in certain places at certain times and "teaching" specified pupils. Teachers have successfully resisted attempts to audit their performances in terms of the behavior of children, so only the fiscal side of the school's operation is audited.

From the standpoint of the larger governmental structure, again most of the existing requirements for accountability fall in category six, dealing with the fiscal operations and with counting of pupils and personnel in specified categories. Only in the case of malfeasance, strictly limited by statute in its definition, will government search out and place blame. The only future-oriented expectation for performance from the standpoint of higher administrative echelons is that progress through grades shall equate roughly with age groups. That professional discourse about schools be intelligible, or actions related to school personnel be explainable or demonstrable, seems not to have concerned school governance at any level, and matters of liability are confined to narrowly defined "causes" rarely remotely related to the performance of students.

Other agencies provide limited remedies. Private schools provide an alternative to parents who are convinced that blame for a child's performance rests with the public school. Proposals now under discussion to broaden the availability of that alternative, such as the voucher plan, apparently will be tested in at least some limited ways in the near future and the results will merit careful study. Predictability is offered by firms seeking performance contracts, and these, too, will merit our careful study. Some of the very best of our schools of education are drawing disciplined minds into the study of educational phenomena, structures, and functions; out of these efforts are coming the most hopeful signs of a developing pedagogical discourse that will be comprehensible not only across disciplines but to the literate layman as well. I hope that we can give some systematic attention to this development, and perhaps illustrate the dimensions and depth and possibilities for extension of that discourse.

The explainability and demonstrability of processes and practices in schooling are perhaps the most puzzling aspects of accountability. The notion that any teaching method that works is good teaching is so pervasive among American educators and so widely accepted popularly that we have made little progress in this century in developing sound theories in pedagogy. The problem seems to be that any innovation, tried by a dedicated teacher and carried through with passion and commitment, works once. We thus have developed an incredible array of methods, proven by the creator, which not only do not advance our theoretical constructs but actually get in the way of school improvement, because they often create distractions and failures when others attempt to apply them to practice. One would hope that more scholars would recognize an opportunity to examine this perennial problem, of interest not only to American educators, and to say something significant about the contributions of the remarkable range of experimentation in the 60's to pedagogical theory.

One encounters much discussion, extending back over the past several decades, about liability for performance by teachers, notably a system of sanctions that would reward high performance

(merit pay) though there seem to be few proposals seriously put forward to penalize bad performance, short of dismissal. Some teacher groups are exploring the possibility of entering into performance contracts as a counte[illegible]asure to contracting with firms, and we can perhaps see the beginning of a transformation in teacher contractual relationships in these efforts. A distinguished New York attorney and Regent, Max Rubin, raised an interesting point recently with Al Shanker in a small group I was with: If teacher contracts continue to become more specific, may not the employing agency eventually be in a position to hold the union liable for unsatisfactory performance? I am sure others in the legal profession will show interest in exploring the feasibility of this idea.

We have a long tradition of auditing firms providing services for the fiscal audit. University professors have traditionally done management and other types of surveys. More recently, management consulting firms, notably Arthur D. Little, Booz Allen and Hamilton, and Cresap, Paget and McCormick, have moved in on this type of survey, and many new firms are in the field gradually taking over the university field service function. Leon Lessinger has frequently discussed an "educational audit" and the significance of this type of service to schools is likely to be tested in the next few years.

The current interest in accountability in education is likely to have profound consequences on schools, for it raises the inevitable question, "Accountable for what?" To answer this question requires the specification of goals in education. Those who use accountability as a lever for change, particularly those firms that seek performance contracts, are accustomed to analyzing problems through the use of mechanistic models that have proved useful to engineers, and more recently to economists and business firms. As we begin to apply those models to education problems (a subject I explored at greater length elsewhere[1]), we find that the first step is specifying our goals. "We are, after all, attempting to recreate our social world, and especially our schools, to fit a model of our invention. We reason that, since we have created com-

plex machines, we can now use the laws we have derived from that experience to reconstruct our social institutions. In that effort we may violate two laws of logic: (1) We may apply our mechanical models to concerns too broad to be encompassed when we fail to perceive the proper scope of the human condition, and (2) we may apply our model to inconsequential ends when we analyze less encompassing statements of human aims."[2]

In our first efforts in performance contracting in schools, we seem to be erring toward the violation of the second law of logic, applying our model to inconsequential goals in education. If we teach the child to read, and to count, the people will ask, as Plato did, why haven't we also taught him to be virtuous?

We have been notably unsuccessful as a society in this century in stating our aims of education. To face the prospect of being driven by circumstances, created as casually as by acceptance of the concept of accountability, to set trivial goals for our educational institutions, is appalling. A quite contrary course seems indicated, rather to dare to set our goals to fit our broadest perception of the scope of the human condition, and to challenge our model-builders to reach toward them, and to be critical of their failures to reach them.

In the remainder of this paper I shall touch briefly on the major aims of education that I perceive as pervasively accepted in the historical documents and contracts of our society, and that I believe are present yet today in the broadly accepted expectations of our people. It would seem to me to be a propitious time in our history to test our consensus on these broader goals, if only to alert us to the dangers of becoming distracted by the increasing triviality of current efforts to state the aims of education.

For the early founders of schools in this country the aims of education were, quite simply, piety and civility, two forms of behavior extensively discussed in the education literature of the 16th and 17th centuries.

The concern for piety meant that children must be taught to read in order that they could study the Bible and acquire thereby

religious faith, spiritual mindedness, temperance, purity, righteousness, and charity, and thereby join the elect, those to be saved after death, the children of God.

The concern for civility involved teaching of good manners and deportment, prudence, courtesy and thoughtfullness, affability, gentleness, urbanity, tolerance and graciousness toward others.

The educational literature of the 18th century reflected the growing impact of the Renaissance on the popular consciousness in its addition of the pursuit of knowledge as an aim of education, and reflected also the growing interest in the political philosophers who emphasized education as a necessary ingredient for a self-governing society. The new Congress in 1787 combined in their preface to the Northwest Ordinance their transformation of the earlier aims of 17th century education and the additions of the 18th in the opening words of that Ordinance: "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged." The curricular materials dealing with morality persisted late in the 19th century, notably in the McGuffey Readers. The extension of knowledge, especially in the sciences and in mathematics, increased the subjects of study and began the confusion, still evident in schools, arising from the assumption that learning facts is educative. The emphasis on good government made much of the fundamental values of our society having to do with liberty and equality, two values that, taken together, mark a profound and continuing dilemma in America.

In the 19th century the industrial revolution was reflected in an additional expectation for the task of the schools, that they teach children to be productive. Productivity, with its connotations of fruitfulness, abundance, creativity, inventiveness, ingenuity, acquisitiveness, gainful employment, earning, saving, and investment, is perhaps best epitomized in the Morrell Act of 1862 establishing the land grant colleges, and in succeeding efforts to encourage vocational education and manpower training that are continuing even into deliberations of the Congress now in session.

Our own century began with rather general acceptance of the aims of education from the past. Piety, with its moral basis for action, if abstracted from the morass of quarrels among sectarian religions that have plagued the concept from Reformation days, probably is still a broadly acceptable aim for education among our people today. Certainly the concept of civility is still with us, if evidenced only by the persistent cries for its restoration to discourse and relationships in the present. Certainly the pursuit of knowledge, the intellectual, or, to use the currently popular term, the cognitive aspects of education, is still broadly acceptable as an aim. Concern is now being expressed by both educators and youth for greater emphasis on the emotional or affective aspects. Our growing dissatisfaction with the quality of discourse almost certainly portends greater emphasis on the concept of civility as it was defined in our earlier history, or as it may become redefined in whatever transformation of the concept we can achieve in our time. Concern for good citizenship as an aim of education persists also, though broadened unquestionably from narrow nationalistic concerns to a deeper social consciousness, a concern for the environment, and recognition of the need for good government and good citizens for the whole world. Certainly the concern for productivity persists broadly among our people, though here the dissenting voices are heard so loudly, especially from the younger age groups, that we can assume some major transformation of this concern is imminent.

To describe a man or a society as pious, civil, knowledgeable, self-governing, and productive, using these terms as we find them defined in their best traditional sense as aims of education in our society, is to endow both the man and the society with most of the cardinal virtues, but not all of them. In the last two decades we appear to be exhibiting a deeper concern for justice in the distribution of social and economic benefits than has been made specific in our earlier curricula; evidence that the lessons have been well-taught is emerging, most markedly in the interests and actions of the recent graduates of our schools. Our great unfinished task is to find some way to teach hope, for in this virtue our current graduates seem sadly deficient. We are finding

sympathetic listeners also to the proposition that schools might be conducted in more humane ways, might even be happy and joyful places in which to spend a significant part of one's life, a possibility that seems not to have occurred to those who earlier shaped the American schools.

These, then, are some of the traditional aims of education in our society, with some speculation on those emerging. One can argue that they are global concepts derived from philosophy and religion, and therefore of little use in an age that seeks to define its educational objectives in behavioral terms. My reply would be that there is a rich literature, which doubtless can be further enriched, that offers ample opportunity for selecting remarkably broad sets of behavioral objectives related to each of the traditional aims. I think no one can seriously argue that any one of the concepts is irrelevant in our time.

It was with these aims for education in mind that state legislatures enacted the laws that established the state school systems through the 19th and into the 20th centuries. It is in terms of these aims, or synonyms or euphemisms for them, that the larger controversies and criticisms of the schools are phrased. We can stir national concern about the assertion that Johnny can't read, but when citizens meet in their local communities to discuss that assertion, the discussion shifts to Johnny's manners, his dress, the length of his hair, his morals, his religious attitudes, his values, and what he's thinking of doing with his life. And it is in terms of these aims that the programs, the faculties, and the students of schools of the future will be judged. We need to develop new standards for measuring the performance of our educational institutions and for reporting on that performance and many people of good will are going about that task in many ways. The plea I offer is that we attend not only to the minutia but that we attend also to shaping standards and criteria for judging how well we achieve the grand aims of education which are certain to persist in the minds of our people. I wish you all well in the task ahead, and hope with you that we can find ways to restate the aims of education more attractively and more in line with our great tradition.

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THE ROLE OF EVALUATION

Henry S. Dyer

AND VICE VERSA

Three events in the history of American education illuminate some of the more important roles that evaluation must play in any system of educational accountability.

I

The first event occurred in 1647 when the Great and General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony enacted what the history books refer to as the Old Deluder Satan Law.[1] This, you will remember, was a law that sought to foil the designs of the devil by insisting that every child in the Colony be taught to read and write. It held each town accountable for providing this instruction out of its own funds. And it backed up its mandate with an annual fine of five pounds to be levied on any town that failed to comply.

One reason, no doubt, that the Puritan Fathers were able to get away with this high-handed infringement on local autonomy was that there was general agreement in those days on the ends and means of education. All children must be taught to read so that they could have direct access to the Scriptures and thereby have an outside chance of avoiding eternal damnation. One of the major problems in education these days is that people are not all that clear and convinced about the ends and means of education.

One reason for this state of affairs has been suggested by Lawrence Cremin:

> "...too few educational leaders in the United States are genuinely preoccupied with educational issues because they have no clear ideas about education... They have too often been managers, facilitators, politicians in the narrow sense. They have been concerned with building buildings, balancing budgets, and pacifying parents, but they have not been prepared to spark a public debate about the ends and means of education."[2]

Another reason for the fuzziness about ends and means is that educational goals, as commonly formulated by educational philosophers, have tended to be cast in such sweeping generalities and remote ideals that they have left school people at a loss to use them meaningfully for assessing the actual ongoing operations of their institutions. This statement is not intended to denigrate the efforts of educational philosophers. Their ideas are a necessary, if neglected, ingredient of the process by which usable goals can be defined and applied in concrete instances. But they are only the <u>beginning</u> of the process; the gulf between the expression of educational ideals and any practical measure of their realization is so wide and deep that few if any working educators have been able to find their way across it.

The educational oratory speaks of goals like "self-fulfillment," "responsible citizenship," and "vocational effectiveness;" the assessment of school efficiency in specific cases usually depends on such measures as retention rate, college-going rate, average daily attendance, and performance on reading tests. Whether there are any rational connections between the numbers and the slogans is a matter that is rarely considered. The assumption seems to be implicit, for instance, that the longer a youngster stays in school, the greater will be his chances of self-fulfillment; or that the higher his reading score, the more likely that he will become a responsible citizen. But such assumptions are left largely unexamined, and in particular cases may be obviously wrong. In short, the answer to the all-important question, "Accountable for <u>what</u>?" is left hanging in midair.

Therefore, one important and decisive role that evaluation must play these days in any educational accountability system, which is not designed solely to find scapegoats to assuage our collective guilt, is that of helping all of us sort out and evaluate our educational goals and objectives, so that we can begin to get some definite and agreed-upon ideas of where we want the schools to be taking us as well as our children, and what we think the priorities ought to be.[3]

Over the years there have been some promising efforts in coping with this problem of goal-setting at a practical level, but a lot still remains to be done if the community served by the schools is to become as deeply and significantly involved in the process as it must be if the notion of accountability is to make any sense at all in shaping education to fit the individual needs of the pupils as well as the needs of the troubled society that they are going to inherit.

II

The next historical event, illustrative of another aspect of the accountability doctrine in education, occurred nearly 300 years after the enactment of the Old Deluder Satan Law -- in 1930 to be exact. This is a bit of personal history, for 1930 was the date when I had my own first traumatic experience of being held professionally accountable as a teacher. I was in my first job teaching senior English. I had one particularly weak student whose parents were bound and determined that he should be shoehorned into a certain prestige college that I firmly believed was well beyond his capabilities. My principal gave me to understand in no uncertain terms that, for my part in this process, I was to be held accountable for seeing to it that the boy passed the old-style College Board exam in English at a level that would make him admissible to the college his parents had chosen for him. The implication was that if the boy failed to make it, the renewal of my contract would be in doubt. In short, my performance as a teacher was to be evaluated, at least in part, on how that student performed on that exam.

Back in the 30's the College Board exams -- unlike those of today -- had passing scores which were defined in terms of performance criteria laid down by the examiners. Today, I suppose those old-fashioned exams of forty years ago, with all their presumed faults, would have probably qualified as "criterion-referenced tests." It is curious how history -- even in testing -- seems to be repeating itself.

In any case, what did I do to prove my accountability in that situation? How did I go about getting students to meet the criterion set up by that old-time criterion-referenced test in English? I did what many other high school teachers were doing in those days. I crammed my students on all the old College Board exam questions of the preceding ten years, filled the kids up with canned themes so that they might appear to write profoundly, though possibly a bit irrelevantly, on any topic that the examiners might dream up, and ground the standard literary classics into their heads until they were thoroughly sick of them.

By so doing I fulfilled my obligation and my contract was renewed. My weakest student passed the English entrance exam with flying colors. He was admitted in September 1930 to the college his parents had chosen. He flunked all of his mid-semester examinations in November 1930, and was fired shortly thereafter. By meeting my obligation under the narrow definition of teacher accountability then prevailing I had succeeded in preparing the student to become a failure in college.

What does this episode suggest about the role of evaluation in an accountability system? It suggests that if the system is to work to the benefit rather than the detriment of the young people who go to school, we must be continually observing and evaluating the side-effects and the after-effects of what goes on in classrooms. For if, by the processes we employ, we teach children to pass tests at the expense of learning to hate the subject in which we test them; or to hate the whole idea of learning, it seems to me we defeat the whole purpose of education and fail to be accountable to the students themselves.

The armamentarium of educational and psychological measurement contains a good many instruments of various types for evaluating students' attitudes toward learning, toward themselves, and toward one another. Admittedly, these instruments are still pretty crude. The state of the art in the measurement of attitudes, values, and the like was summed up by David Krathwohl and his collaborators in these words in their book on educational objectives in the affective domain:

> "...we cite many techniques for appraising such objectives, but we are fully aware of the fact that much must be done before the development of testing techniques in the affective domain will reach the rather high state of clarity and precision which is now possible in the cognitive domain."[4]

Nonetheless, if, as we have been saying all along, the schools are to be concerned about the development of the whole child, we had better make judicious but regular use of the best of these techniques. Be it noted, however, that such techniques should not, in my view, be used as a basis for evaluating the children themselves. They should be used, rather, as a basis for coming as close as possible to evaluating the full impact that schooling may be having upon the lives of the children. Insofar as schools fail to do their best to seek out this kind of evaluative information about themselves regularly and routinely they are failing to be accountable in any educationally acceptable sense of the word.

III

The third historic date in the development of the principle of accountability in education was April 1965 -- the date when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was signed into law. You will recall that clauses 5 and 6 in Section 205 (a) of the original Act provided that procedures be adopted for annually evaluating programs designed to meet the needs of educationally deprived children and that the evaluative data accruing from these procedures was to be incorporated in annual reports from each local education agency to the state

education agency and thence to the Federal government.[5] The purpose, of course, was to try to account for the incremental educational benefits that the Federal dollars were buying, and it is this aspect of the evaluation/accountability equation that is understandably uppermost today in the minds of many taxpayers and their representatives on school boards and in legislative bodies.

In view of the agonizing fiscal crises in so many school districts, this is, of course, a legitimate concern. It is a concern, however, that generally has overlooked the difficult problem of providing the needed evaluative information. The authors of one intensive study of the early functioning of ESEA have said that "when ESEA was in its first weeks and months of implementations... the infrastructure of systematic program evaluation was either nonexistent or woefully primitive."[6] Anyone who has kept up with attempts to evaluate ESEA programs -- particularly Title I programs -- in the last six years knows that this statement is still largely true, in spite of some noble efforts to lick the problem. At least part of the reason is that there are still nowhere near enough people out there in the school districts who know how to put a dependable and meaningful evaluation program together -- one that is capable of genuinely and dependably relating educational benefits to educational costs, and this despite numerous attempts to apply to the educational enterprise such appealing notions as cost-effectiveness, planning-programming-budgeting, management information systems, and the like.

Be all this as it may, it seems to me that the most important aspect of Section 205 of ESEA is not that it appeared to hold local school systems accountable for making educational expenditures produce a measurable payoff in pupil learning. In point of fact it did nothing of the kind. If you read the original Act carefully, you come to realize that all it called for was merely a rendering of an accounting -- an evaluation, if you will -- of what was going on in Title I programs and how well they were working. The big emphasis was, and still is, on objective and accurate annual reports on how the educational process is functioning on behalf of students and how much money is being spent in the effort. This is a type of annual report

that had never been produced before and, to my knowledge, has not been produced yet. We may know how much we spend on textbooks, on teachers' salaries, on busing, on food service, and so on, but we still do not know how to cost out a program in elementary school reading, or high school science, or health, or whatever, in such a way that we can actually isolate the costs of each program *per se* and relate those costs to the children's growth in reading competence, or their love of books, or their physical well-being.

When you put the problem of rendering an accounting in this way, you may well begin to wonder whether the problem, like that of squaring the circle, can ever be solved. It suggests that, in approaching the question of how to render an accounting of what is going on in an educational system, there is a real question of how far the accountability concepts that may be useful in the control of industrial systems can be applied to school systems. For the production of learning and human development is hardly analogous to the production of soap or cat food or space vehicles.

Moreover, the measurement problem in each case is just about as different as it can be. In trying to achieve accurate measurement of the inputs and outputs of the industrial enterprise, one is concerned with making the human factors in the measurement process as small as possible, and in many areas the instrumentation for this purpose has become remarkably automatic and efficient. In the measurement of the cognitive and psychosocial functioning of students, however, the human factors are the very essence of what we are trying to measure and evaluate. Consequently, when we speak of measuring such human qualities as problem solving in mathematics, or teacher effectiveness, or vocational aspirations, we are speaking of a process that is vastly different from that of measuring electric power output, or the noise level in communication lines, or the trajectory of a missile. Indeed, the difference is so great that an atomic scientist concerned with measuring the speed of electrons once suggested to me that we should probably drop the word measurement altogether when dealing with educational and psychological phenomena.

He may well have been right, for I suspect that much of the misinterpretation and over-interpretation of test-score data that bedevils so much educational thinking stems from the failure to realize that the metaphor of the yardstick, or the chronometer, or the ammeter, or whatever, is a wholly inappropriate metaphor when one is trying to evaluate pupils' development and the educational programs and environmental conditions that affect it.

I do not intend the foregoing to mean that, in some appropriate sense, the measurement of pupil performance is a hopeless or futile endeavor. Quite the contrary! Furthermore, such measurement is indispensable if we ever expect to render a rational rather than a purely intuitive accounting of how schools and school systems are doing. But the rendering of such accounts in education is not likely to be very sound or instructive if educational decision-makers think that assessing the quality of human learning and development is on all fours with measuring the quality of widgets.

IV

To recapitulate briefly at this point, what sort of perspective on the evaluation/accountability equation do the three bits of history provide? First, the Puritan Fathers who wrote the Old Deluder Law were so sure of their educational objectives and the means by which they were to be attained that they were able to get away with holding every school district accountable for providing a particular type of instructional service. They did not, however, concern themselves with the evaluation of the effects of the instructional service provided, since they assumed that that would be taken care of by more remote means on the Day of the Last Judgment. They were apparently unaware of the possibilities of evaluation as a form of self-correcting feedback.

Back in 1930, I was held accountable for producing a certain single measurable result, and by that result my performance was evaluated. There was, however, no obligation upon me to account for the means by which I obtained the result. The feedback was sure and swift, but it was what Norbert Wiener would have called defective

feedback inasmuch as it included no information on any side-effects or after-effects my teaching methods may have been having on the student.[7]

ESEA holds school districts accountable for rendering an accounting -- that is, for providing an evaluation -- of the effects of the programs being Federally funded, but it says nothing about any punitive action that might be taken it the hoped-for results of the programs are not forthcoming. That is, it calls for effective evaluative feedback -- which incidentally it has not yet been able to get in any comprehensive way -- but it does not specify how the feedback would be used if it were obtainable.

In looking back over these three aspects of the role of evaluation in the evaluation/accountability equation, one gets the feeling that something is missing and that that something is to be supplied by a reversal of roles. In addition to thinking of the role of evaluation in an accountability system, one needs to think also of the role of accountability in an evaluation system. Which is to say that if educational evaluation programs are to serve any useful educational purpose, then those who support and manage school systems must be made accountable in three ways: (1) for seeing to it that the evaluative information the programs provide is as good as it can be, (2) for seeing to it that the information is interpreted within the limits imposed by the nature of the data, and (3) for seeing to it that the information is used in some systematic fashion to find ways of continually bettering the quality of instruction for all the children in all the schools.

A final comment or two on each of these three points is now in order.

1. How to make sure that the information an evaluation program provides is as good as it can be. This means first of all selecting tests and other instruments that are well-crafted and well-validated for the purposes to which they are to be put. There is a considerable body of literature on how to make such selections and an even larger body of measures from which to select.[8] This material should be conscientiously examined before picking any test for use in the schools. Second, it means that the tests shall be administered in a manner that guarantees, insofar as possible, that the students know

what they are expected to do and that they will do the best they can. This may seem painfully obvious, but the fact of the matter is that test data is too often invalidated right at the source because of maladministration. Finally, and equally obviously, the tests must be scored with scrupulous accuracy. I mention these humdrum rules only because I am impressed by the fact that the failure to observe them is usually overlooked as a possible explanation of why the pupils in some schools appear to perform surprisingly higher or lower than their counterparts in other schools.

2. How to make sure that the results are interpreted within the limits imposed by the nature of the data. Here we are in considerably deeper trouble because it is abundantly clear that most consumers of achievement test results seem to be amazingly unaware of the limitations of such data. One of the glaring problems in this connection is that of getting those who make educational decisions on the basis of test scores to realize that the best of achievement tests is never more than a sample of a student's performance and is therefore inevitably subject to sampling error. This simply means that if his score on, say, an arithmetic test places him among the bottom third of his classmates today, his score tomorrow on an alternate form of the same arithmetic test has a good chance of placing him among the middle third of his classmates.[9] Failure to recognize this inherent bounciness of test scores can and does lead to all sorts of mistaken conclusions about the effectiveness of remedial programs for students who are selected for such programs on the basis of their low achievement test scores.

Another glaring problem in the interpretation of academic achievement tests has to do with the kinds of numbers in which the measures are customarily expressed -- namely, so-called grade equivalency scores. Except for the notorious IQ, these are probably the most convenient devices ever invented to lead people into misinterpretations of students' test results. Both the IQ and grade equivalency scores are psychological and statistical monstrosities. I have defined the IQ as "a dubious normative score wrapped up in a ratio that is based upon an impossible assumption about the equivalence

of human experience and the opportunity to learn."[10] A grade equivalency score has many of the same properties, and as such it lures educational practitioners to succumb to what Alfred North Whitehead called "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness."[11]

There is not enough time here to go into all the irrationalities that underlie the construction of grade equivalency scales, nor all the misconceptions they generate in the public mind about what achievement tests are saying about how well students and schools are doing. Instead, I urge you to read a recent brilliant paper by Roger Lennon, entitled "Accountability and Performance Contracting."[12] Lennon's credentials are among the best, since he is senior vice president of the company that publishes two of the most widely-used achievement test batteries -- the Stanford and the Metropolitan -- both of which are well-fitted out with grade equivalency scales. I have said the paper is brilliant; one might also call it courageous, because in it, Lennon, from his own intimate knowledge of the subject, spells out in grim detail just about everything that is absurd, wrong, and misleading about grade equivalency scales and why they should not be used in assessing professional accountability or in determining how much educational contractors should be paid.

In his frank discussion of this and other similar problems in the interpretation of educational measurements, Lennon nicely exemplifies an important aspect of the role of accountability in educational evaluation.

3. Finally, how to use evaluative data in a systematic fashion to find ways of continually bettering instruction for all the children in all the schools. This, it seems to me, is the major task that lies ahead, if educational evaluation is to fulfill its promise. And it brings me to the questions in your conference program that I am expected to answer. I shall now answer them:

1. Can the relevant inputs, outputs, and conditions of operation [of educational systems] be satisfactorily measured? The answer is, "Yes, for the most part they can be, if school systems will make the kind of informed and serious effort required."

2. If so, what are the appropriate techniques? And the answer is, "Read my extended remarks on this subject in the Phi Delta Kappan of last December."[13]

3. If not, what remains to be done? I have already said that adequate evaluative techniques are available if one has the will to use them. Nevertheless, it must be said that we do need better measures than we now have of the personal-social development of students, better measures than we now have of the many factors inside and outside the school that influence students' overall development, and more particularly better ways of observing and describing what actually goes on day by day in the teaching-learning process. By this I mean that we need far better ways of systematically monitoring and describing what is really going on behind the facade of fancy labels by which we characterize so many so-called innovative programs like I.T.A., I.P.I., G.S.A., M.B.O., the Open Classroom, the Discovery Method, and so on ad infinitum. I am convinced that we can obtain these kinds of information if we have the will to do so.

4. Finally, are different techniques needed for different types of educational systems? And here my answer is, "Yes, but...." Yes, the evaluative techniques one would use for a small homogeneous educational system would be different but also less satisfactory than those one would use for a large heterogeneous system. But the best way for small homogeneous systems to secure the most useful evaluative data about the effectiveness of their educational programs is to join forces, for evaluative purposes, with other systems, possibly on a state or regional basis, so as to enhance the possibility of uncovering, through well-worked-out statistical analyses involving all the schools, those educational innovations that have the best chance of paying off for their own students.

The last answer is meant to imply that an evaluation system expressly designed to keep the quality of instruction continually rising will be a highly complex system. One might prefer something simpler. But I suggest that, in the highly complex world in which we now have to live, simplistic approaches are not likely to help us much in finding our way to education for either the good life or the good society.

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THE FUTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

John W. Porter

There are three aspects to the topic I am to discuss at this afternoon session. But before talking about these three aspects, a general definition of accountability in public education seems in order:

Accountability is not performance contracting. Accountability is not program budgeting (P.P.B.S.). Accountability is not cost effectiveness. It is not testing nor is it merit pay for teachers, or a means of relieving teachers of their jobs.

Accountability is the guarantee that all students without respect to race, income, or social class will acquire the minimum school skills necessary to take full advantage of the choices that accrue upon successful completion of public schooling, or we in education will describe the reasons why.

What accountability probably means to the adult layman is returning in part to what existed in the 30's and 40's; a move away from the permissive days of the 50's and 60's. But this time instead of the "Produce, Slide Through or Fail" responsibility being on the student, the accountability emphasis envisioned as a "produce or change" concept assigned as the responsibility of the educational establishment.

For a moment, let me share with you the beliefs that I have, and that I believe we should all have, in regard to public education, and why there is a need for educational accountability.

First, I believe that public education must guarantee that nearly all of the young people -- those children in our elementary schools -- will acquire competencies in the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, regardless of their socio-economic background. This does not mean any leveling off on the development of the whole child. It does mean altering the educational delivery system in whatever way is necessary to ensure that the daughter of the unskilled ghetto worker gains from the kindergarten the educational choices that presently accrue to the son of a college professor.

Second, I believe that our public education, particularly in the secondary schools must be programmed in such a way that the students will feel their secondary school experience is equipping them to be effective citizens in the adult society of the 21st century. We should be concerned when we see that perhaps two-thirds of all the work we do in our secondary schools is done to prepare 35 percent of our young people to go to college, when at the same time, nationally, we have a third of our entering ninth graders failing to graduate.

For counseling effectiveness, we need to strongly consider the use of public relations persons on loan from business and industry to the secondary schools to supplement the professionally-oriented counselors. If the status of the world of work is to change to meet existing manpower needs, and if we are to demonstrate that everyone doesn't need to go to college to teach, we could well benefit from this "outside" contact for our pupils on a regular basis, not just the "career day" type of exposure.

We should also be concerned about the accountability of a system that seems to get the 6'5" basketball or football star through the academic mazes and to an attractive salary, while being ill-equipped to meet the needs of his 5'6" brother.

Third, I believe acceptable public education is going to require that we educators be responsible for seeking out, establish-

ing and coordinating effective programs of adult continuing education which meet the needs of welfare mothers, the underemployed, the housewives and the everyday workers that want some vocational skills.

When our educational system is so streamlined and so exceptional that it is able to respond to the needs of most of our 200 million citizens in regard to these goals, then and only then will we be carrying out our educational committment to the citizens of our country and be achieving a degree of accountability.

Dr. Lessinger, former Associate Commissioner for Elementary and Secondary Education in the U.S. Office of Education, stated:

> "Today the questions asked focus on results obtained for the amount of resources used, and whether or not taxpayers are in fact getting their money's worth. The questions are pointed, insistent and abrasive. I for one welcome the questions and hopefully we as a profession will want to respond to them with alacrity.

The challenge is clear in my mind and I hope in yours. We must start to guarantee student performance, one aspect of accountability in the future; and you don't do this by instituting remedial programs to correct deficiencies in secondary schools. We must begin to guarantee year by year growth, starting in the elementary schools. Such an undertaking presupposes clearly spelled out performance objectives and criteria references for measurement. Criterion references for measuring student performance would presuppose an agreed-upon level of competency in tasks that were being undertaken by the students.

Many of the principles underlying performance contracts and the more general concept of accountability when put together are worthy of consideration and utilization by all teachers. We will have accountability in the future. Accountability should be welcomed by the teaching profession, since the ultimate result is improved teacher performance and possible increased teacher salaries, not abdication of professional prerogatives.

Several aspects of accountability we can expect in the future which are currently being looked upon with skepticism are:

1. Paying for results rather than promises.
2. Designing performance objectives to evaluate the instructional procedures.
3. Identifying each student's characteristics and entrance level.
4. Specifying in advance desired outcomes of individual student performance.
5. Testing the instructional sequences to see if they achieve what they purport to achieve.
6. Reordering instructional strategies and personnel based upon student needs, abilities, interests, and attitudes.
7. Involving the parents of the community in the educational process right in the classroom.
8. Informing students, parents, and taxpaying citizens what we can and cannot do in a given situation and why.

These eight factors are difficult to refute. They answer the very basic question of "What if a student does not reach the objectives?" That is, we as educators have to be prepared in the future to tell students, and their parents, that the student hasn't achieved; he needs more summer work, or extended day or week help, or the diploma he will receive is for attendance, not achievement. Accountability of the future means not passing students from level to level because of chronological age and presence in the daily classroom.

The eight factors cited are difficult to incorporate into everyday classroom use given the way classrooms are now organized. But accountability in the final analysis is nothing more than better management by the teacher in the classroom, by the principal in his

or her office, and by the superintendent at his conference table. For this simple reason, accountability will become almost a household word and acceptance is the future of accountability that is assured.

In the December 1970 issue of the Phi Delta Kappan, Myron Lieberman, as guest editor, wrote:

> If the public schools do not develop acceptable criteria and procedures for accountability, they will stimulate the emergence of accountability through alternative school systems, i.e., the voucher system. To put it bluntly, if school systems do not begin to do a better job of relating school costs to educational outcomes, they are likely to be faced with a growing demand for alternatives to public schools. These alternatives may not be better -- and may be even worse than the public schools. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how public school educators could argue this point effectively unless and until they develop more effective ways of being accountable to their patrons."

Accountability, whether or not we want it, is going to be a part of the educational scene in the 70's. The important issue for teachers and administrators is that the failures of the past and present cannot be allowed to rest solely upon the shoulders of the educational community. If we accept this, then let us look at these three questions:

I. What educational improvements is it reasonable to expect for the future application of techniques of accountability and how will they be obtained?

II. What are the probable sources of resistance to accountability, and how can such resistance from within and from outside the educational institution be overcome?

III. What important defects in the educational system are likely to remain unaffected by accountability?

Let us now review some of the possible educational improvements which might come about as a result of using techniques of accountability.

I.

Schools traditionally have not been problem-solving agencies. Schools traditionally have not focused upon cost effective management techniques in the classrooms. And most schools have not been held responsible for student performance.

Future improvements in education as a result of innovative techniques will be based in part upon the development of two specific types of information by local school districts:

1. Improved and more comprehensive student performance measures in the cognitive as well as affective domains.
2. Improved and more specific performance objectives related to the functions and contributions of teachers, principals, administrators, school boards, and the parents of students.

At present, such information does not to a great extent exist in school systems. As a result, a major consideration in moving toward accountability must be development of data gathering information systems and analytical assessment of the data gathered.

If properly managed, such an arrangement should result in a school system operation based upon some clearly spelled out objectives. Felix M. Lopez labeled this "Management by Objectives" in a recent article entitled "Accountability in Education."

This process requires a school district:

1. to identify the common goals at all grade levels for all subjects provided;
2. to think through its management procedures or delivery system in terms of pre-testing and post-testing as they relate to responsibilities of teachers;

3. to evaluate each student's performance in accordance with some overall efforts, or specify why such performance cannot be achieved. If we fail to evaluate, while we may know exactly what we are doing, we will never know what we have done;

4. to assure that school district goals are translated into performance objectives understood by students and parents alike;

5. to reach an understanding of steps to take when the child does not reach the minimum level of proficiency at the originally agreed-upon specified time.

To amplify or clarify these points in terms of educational improvements which might be derived by the application of techniques of accountability, one needs to look at what our common goals are in terms of "grade level" performance. In essence, four educational improvements should emerge:

1. Improved teacher classroom management and professional performance.

2. Improved student academic achievement, especially by the lower half of the classroom distribution.

3. Improved student attitudes and behavior.

4. Improved reporting of student progress in terms of student-school-community relations.

Further techniques of accountability should help remove the "blackboard curtain" created by the construction of classrooms on a 30 to 1 basis. Accountability to be effective will have to permeate through the closed-door classroom. Thus, each teacher working with parents and others at each level will have to decide what exactly are the classroom expectations. In the fourth grade, for example, we must ask, "What is it we want fourth graders to know when they have finished a year in our classroom?"

This concept of accountability focuses upon educational improvements by level and subject, and as some have suggested could result in a marriage between technology, and personal pedagogy, with the emphasis on measuring individual student progress.

Another dimension of the future of accountability for improving education must result in less student absenteeism, fewer dropouts, less special education, less fear of actually failing a grade, or less fear of "sliding through" feeling inadequate for the next level, lower teacher turnover, and less family mobility during the school year.

The improvements I have described will be obtained through local initiative resulting in a reordering of priorities, from successful performance contract arrangements, from new leadership directives, from state departments of education, and from state and federal appropriation specifications.

Let us now talk about our second basic question -- who will oppose accountability?

II.

There are significant numbers of individuals in at least eight groups that may oppose the concept of accountability as I have defined it: (1) students, (2) local school educators, (3) central administrative staff, (4) school board members, (5) taxpayers, (6) legislators, (7) teacher training instructors, and (8) state department of education personnel.

Some students may resist the concept since it will focus on their performance in certain areas. Common educational objectives are desired; however, when these conflict with individual student preferences, an accommodation must be reached. Such accommodation however does not mean acquiescing, but spelling out in clear, precise language the alternatives available.

Some teachers may not support the accountability concept because it implies that their work is being evaluated -- and this is disconcerting to some individuals. In addition, some teachers'

associations may oppose the concept on the basis that it implies an evaluation of the entire teaching profession.

Some central administrators, including middle management, may resist the concept of accountability -- not because of a desire to avoid involvement, but because it may imply that outside assistance be brought in. This assistance may be a threat to the established practices of administrators. However, one of the major fallacies of educational management is that all, or nearly all, schools must be run in the same manner: they start at promptly 8:30 a.m. and close at exactly 3:30 p.m.; students are enclosed in units called "classrooms" except when they are allowed outside for recess or to pass between classes; all students are given the same curricula; and so on. The accountability concept may seriously challenge standardized practices -- particularly in school systems when significant proportions of students have been shown to be failing.

It is likely that school board members will generally favor the accountability concept as it holds the promise of alleviating educational problems at little cost; however, if the concept is seen as one that requires additional monies, it is likely that many school boards will balk at the idea. Local taxpayers, too, will favor the idea -- so long as it does not cost additional tax dollars.

State legislators are a mixed lot of ideologies and experiences, and they carry a variety of expectations for the schools. It is difficult to predict their feelings as a group -- however, they will carefully scrutinize any concept that may cost additional monies and one senses that they are currently not as appreciative of how well the public schools are working as they might be; in some situations with justification.

Teacher training institutions are frequently wary of innovations. It seems as if evaluations are conducted, but we too seldom see actual changes in practice. Why does this occur? Who, or what, stills the program? It is likely that increased

accountability in the elementary and secondary school settings will result in increased pressure on the teacher trainers and their administrators to turn out more graduates who can guarantee performance.

Finally, some staff members of state departments of education will resist the concept because it will mean a drastic reordering of priorities and activities for them. The states are thought by many to be constitutionally responsible for education. If states are to take a leadership role in exercising this responsibility, it is likely that at least six implications will emerge:

1. State departments may be required to standardize educational assessment of pupil progress.
2. State departments may be required to develop uniform local budgetary procedures.
3. State departments may be required to establish procedures for equalizing financial resources by district.
4. State departments may be required to adopt guidelines for the reorganization of school districts.
5. State departments may be required to get involved in teacher negotiations.
6. State departments may be required to move from locally defined regulatory service and consultative subservient agencies to monitoring and management support agencies.

Chief State School Officers will have to assume a leadership role not only in establishing in-service training for their own staffs, but also for encouraging regional staffs within their states to tune in, as well as establish immediate discussions with the various professional groups directly affected by the concept.

In responding to the second part of this question, let me state, there is no panacea to overcome the resistance to accountability, however, the complete involvement of those directly affected will help.

Aaron Wildavsky, writing in the Phi Delta Kappan journal in December 1970, is right when he states, "No plan for accountability can succeed unless all the major participants in the educational process...see something in it for themselves."

Many good teachers may, with the proper involvement in accountability, overcome the emotional trauma of having a class of failing students, if shown how such techniques can provide direction and support against arbitrary administrative decisions. At the same time, principals may begin to view accountability as an added leverage for dealing with the ineffective teacher. The other six groups of the eight, once involved and when we have identified clearly the specific benefits for them, may accept the pain of raising more money, for example, rather than opposing the concept. Different strategies and forces would be the deciding factors, based on the local and state conditions. In any event, communication in regard to the accountability concepts must be conveyed in such a way that all groups can accept the ultimate objectives, improved educational performance, at a cost which can be justified.

We have talked about what accountability can do, and how to go about getting it, and we have talked about some of the difficulties of obtaining accountability.

Let's now look at what are some of our problems that accountability cannot overcome.

III.

As mentioned, implementation of the accountability concept will not alleviate all of the problems of our educational system. A number of vexing socio-educational views will remain, including:

1. the issue of how monies should be allocated to schools in order to best facilitate equality of educational opportunity;

2. the issue of how educational monies should be collected in order to best facilitate an adequate and fair source of school support;

3. the issue of how teachers should be certified to teach in the schools in order to facilitate our best students going into the professions with the best possible preparation;

4. the issue of constructing school facilities that will adequately and fairly serve the next generation of students;

5. the issue of how the often ponderous educational bureaucracy can best be organized so as to facilitate a new sense of urgency and of innovative leadership that will respond more adequately and quickly to societal needs; and

6. the complex issues surrounding student disinterest and disaffection which mirror a more pervasive societal crisis.

In summary, I have defined accountability of the future as a quality or state of education whereby educational institutions take responsibility for ensuring that their students reach agreed-upon and clearly-defined educational objectives. I have further discussed two aspects of accountability: (1) possible benefits to the educational system that may result from widespread adoption of the concept, and (2) possible sources of resistance to accountability. In addition, I have spoken briefly of the problems that face us -- and will still face us even if we attempt to hold our schools "accountable."

Let me conclude by stating that I think the movement toward accountability in education can be a healthy one, as it can help to ensure that all children will be served by the schools. However, let me also close with a warning: accountability is not a panacea; the major problems of this society and its schools will not be solved without a national, state, and local reordering of priorities and without an equalization of the educational, social, and political opportunities available to our children, youth, and adults.

Maybe the most beneficial outcome of the future in accountability will be a complete shift in the role of the school, which has up to now professed to be committed to meeting the needs of all of the children of all of the people. This possible overstatement, sadly to say, is one of the big reasons for the current controversy over public schools. Accountability, more than any other single concept, will in the future force all of us as educators to examine this all embracing goal or American ideal. We need to ask ourselves, "Are there institutions other than the school that might be or could be used to assist some of the children of some of the people in accomplishing certain tasks?"

The future of accountability, whether the emphasis remains on efforts to relate "educational inputs" to "student output," or whether the emphasis is on patron choice, that is vouchers, free schools, open enrollments or parochiaid, school officials will in the future have to face each issue by answering clearly to six specific questions.

1. What are the common and specific goals to which the teacher and school are striving?
2. What student, community or societal needs inventories are available, on paper, to indicate change strategies which should be undertaken?
3. What specific and measurable performance objectives have been written down that would enable parents, students, and teachers to understand the minimum expectations of the unstructured programs?
4. What analysis of the existing delivery system is available to indicate that the current educational input approach is manageable and defensible as compared to the alternatives?
5. What forms of testing and evaluation will be undertaken to enable the "at large community" to know whether or not the delivery system measured up to the performance predictions?

6. What recommendations are the school systems ready to make as a result of the testing and evaluation data?

Perhaps we have always had accountability -- we always checked out what went into education -- facilities, materials, warm bodies, hot lunches -- but seldom did we worry about what came forth; what pupils learned; what skills were obtained. In fact, we went out of our way to find excuses for those children who did not learn -- broken homes, language barriers, ethnic or national background, malnutrition. That is, we placed too much responsibility for success upon the student and his parents. But, if the student didn't perform, we began passing him up the educational ladder anyway. What is envisioned now is a strengthening of the role of the teacher, so that he or she is not placed in such a situation. The future, as accountability becomes firmly entrenched, will allow for very few excuses. We educators will be responsible for failure, and the exciting, fantastic goal before us is to have achievement realized by nearly the total school population.

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PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

III

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ACCOUNTABILITY: LA NOUVELLE VAGUE?*

This spring the National School Boards Association is holding five regional conferences on accountability; the American Management Association is holding three; Educational Testing Service is having one in Washington and one in Los Angeles. There have been countless other sessions sponsored by such diverse groups as the National Committee for Support of Public Schools, Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, the Center for Urban Education, and the Ohio Division of Guidance and Testing.

Journal editors -- recently for the Phi Delta Kappan and Educational Technology -- are devoting whole issues to accountability.

Foundations and federal agencies are allocating hundreds of thousands of dollars to feasibility studies of voucher systems, experiments in performance contracting, and that new area of scientific and philosophical inquiry, meta-accountability. (It was inevitable with all of the accountability talk that there would emerge a willing and transcending profession to talk about the accountability talk.)

Only a gasp before it announced its need to cut back some 40 million dollars' worth of services for the rest of this school year, the New York City Board of Education, in cooperation with the United

*Speech presented at the Hollywood, California, conference in the unavoidable absence of Dr. H. T. James.

Federation of Teachers, told the press that it was planning to let a hundred thousand dollar contract for "an accountability design."

What is this thing that is causing educators to do so much traveling and eat so much rubbery chicken with cold mashed potatoes? That is pushing preschool education, computer assisted instruction, sensitivity training, black studies programs, and the National Institute of Education off the pages of the journals and the newsletters? That is readily prying funds from close-fisted agencies? And that can bring even one school board into close harmony with a teachers union?

Let us hear first the words of Saint Leon -- Lessinger, of course, who, if not the father, is certainly the prophet of the new cult:

> [Accountability is] the process designed to ensure that any individual can determine for himself if the schools are producing the results promised (1970, p. 52).

On a later occasion, Dr. Lessinger invoked his Principle of Public Stewardship through Accountability:

> Independent, continuous and publicly reported outside review of promised results of a bureaucracy promotes competence and responsiveness in that bureaucracy (1971, p. 11).

Although Lessinger started his definition of "accountability" at a level of complexity and application considerably beyond the simple statement in Webster's Collegiate -- "to be accountable" is to be "answerable" or "explicable" -- the explication of the concept has become a major professional occupation.

Lieberman notes that, in spite of variations in definitions of "accountability":

> At a common sense level, there is accountability when resources and efforts are related to results in ways that are useful for policy making, resource allocation, or compensation (1970, p. 194).

Barro does not question the "general meaning and import for the schools":

> ...schools and school systems, or more precisely, the professional educators who operate them, should be held responsible for educational outcomes -- for what children learn...higher quality education can be obtained by making the professionals responsible for their product...(1969, p. 196).

President Nixon made accountability "official" in his 1970 Educational Message:

> School administrators and school teachers alike are responsible for their performance, and it is in their interest as well as in the interests of their pupils that they be held accountable.

The emptiness of such a statement is striking without the specification of exactly who is responsible for what. Henry Dyer, of all the explicators, has dealt most thoughtfully with this problem. His definition of "accountability" embraces three general principles:

1. The professional staff of a school is to be held collectively responsible for knowing as much as it can (a) about the intellectual and personal-social development of the pupils in its charge, and (b) about the conditions and educational services that may be facilitating or impeding the pupils' achievement.

2. The professional staff of a school is to be held collectively responsible for using this knowledge as best it can to maximize the development of its pupils toward certain clearly defined and agreed-upon pupil performance objectives.

3. The board of education has a corresponding responsibility to provide the means and technical assistance whereby the staff of each school can acquire, interpret, and use the information necessary for carrying out the two foregoing functions (1970, p. 206).

In addition to emphasizing process rather than product, Dyer restricts himself to the school as the unit of observation and labels short-term efforts to demonstrate accountability as exploratory at best. The only difficulty in Dyer's argument lies in the definition of "a school."

Hartnett (1971), in a paper soon to be published, will help clarify matters further for observers of the newly systematic educational scene by spelling out the differences between educational accountability and educational evaluation. Many educators felt that the latter was still not secure in their vocabularies -- much less their practices -- when the "new wave" hit. Fortunately, they do not have to be bowled over completely. Accountability and evaluation are both concerned with the effects of educational programs -- with whether they are meeting their objectives. They both utilize measures of educational input and output and documentation of the "treatment" and surrounding conditions. They differ in two main ways:

1. Evaluation is concerned primarily with effectiveness (the degree to which the institution or system succeeds in doing whatever it is trying to do); accountability is concerned with effectiveness and efficiency (the capacity to achieve results with a given expenditure of resources). Thus the latter is even more complex that the former, since it must encompass not only attempts to determine success but also how much it cost to obtain it and the relationship between cost and benefit.

2. Educational evaluation -- though sometimes mandated in general terms by a funding agency -- is largely the business and province of the educational institution or system, itself; and it stands to succeed to the extent that it is viewed by administrators and staff as a vehicle for program improvement. Accountability, on the other hand, carries with it the notion of external judgment and control. The advocates of accountability view this as a positive feature -- the taxpayers have a right to know. But quoting McGhan, quoting one classroom teacher:

> If we say that someone is accountable we usually mean that "he must suffer the consequences of his actions." We hardly

> ever mean the more positive "he will profit from the consequences of his actions" (1970, p. 13).

Of course, as Roger Lennon has reminded us, the idea of accountability is not new:

> ...at the University of Bologna in the 15th century, student-enacted statutes required that the "professor start his lectures at the beginning of the book, cover each section sequentially, and complete the book by the end of the term"; if the professor failed to achieve the schedule, he forfeited part of funds that he himself had had to deposit at the beginning of the term! (1971, p. 3).

And a recent letter writer to the Phi Delta Kappan has noted that:

> The Education Code of Sierra Leone in 1870 provided for a "result" grant of sixpence for each pass in an examination in the three R's. This policy was followed in Gambia, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria. The policy was an imitation of the English system which was abandoned in England in 1897 (Sherman, 1970, p. 253).

Not new either is the concern of the public with the quality of children's education: In 1830, a group of Philadelphia workingmen surveyed the curriculum and found it wanting. They said, it "extends, in no case, further than a tolerable proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and sometimes to a slight acquaintance with geography..." (Cremin, 1951, p. 35).

The most unfair impression that accountability advocates might leave with those they are trying to proselytize is that great numbers of teachers and educational administrators have not felt -- do not feel -- a strong sense of compassion for their students and responsibility for their intellectual development. But the social milieu and the educational problems of the 1970's are so complex that it is no wonder that they are reaching for almost any rope that offers to save them from their sea of frustration. Whether accountability is their best hope for salvation, whether in hanging on to it they will

be swept further out to sea, or whether the energy they expend in grasping it will leave little left for climbing into a sound lifeboat that is just over the horizon -- these are serious problems to be contended with. For accountability must be taken seriously.

It is already a powerful force in education for at least two reasons: First, it has managed in a relatively short time to accumulate the trappings of a discipline: Parts of accountability have been delineated, the delineation of the parts has been reinforced by names for them, there are roles associated with the parts, and some techniques have been offered for carrying out the roles. Second, accountability is a large enough vessel to hold the concerns of many parties to the educational process; even if they are not all sympathetic, they are all involved.

Let us look first at the parts and then at some of the parties.

Accountability has at least five major divisions or manifestations:

1. Performance contracting -- establishing with a contractor a level of payment based on the level of student performance delivered. The contractor is usually a commercial company, frequently with educational curriculum products to offer. Standardized achievement tests provide the criteria of success. Recently Newsweek magazine predicted that 170 school districts would spend 50 million dollars on performance contracting this year (1970, p. 58). There are those who point out that performance contracting is associated more with training in the industrial sense than with education in the broad sense.

2. Turn-keying -- the process whereby a program established under a performance contract is adopted by a school system and operated by its personnel. Some performance contracts specify the cost and effort required for turn-keying.

3. Auditing -- the independent examination of an educational effort or performance contract to verify results, check on processes, personnel, and progress, and -- frequently -- make an independent report to an interested external agency. More auditors than performance con-

tractors seem to come from nonprofit agencies. The demand for independent audit seems to be directly related to the distance between the program and the funding source.

4. Education vouchers -- allowing education of children to be bought by parents in a "free market," through vouchers provided by school district officials or government agencies. This plan is associated primarily with James Coleman, economist Milton Friedman, and the Harvard Center for the Study of Public Policy. It implies, in various of its proposed forms, regulations relating to selection of students, access to the schools for financial and program audit, standards of educational quality, and availability of evaluative data to potential purchaser-parents. The accountable party is the independently operated school.

5. Incentive pay -- paying teachers on the basis of the performance of their pupils. This harks back to earlier century practices of the type already cited, and so far it has met with little more popularity than any of the other merit-pay schemes advanced in recent years. Kenneth Clark of the Metropolitan Applied Research Center has made more headlines than headway in attempting to implement such an incentive pay plan in District of Columbia schools.

Coming to be more and more identified with "accountability" are another five activities on concepts. They come from other philosophical and operational sources with which they continue to be associated. They are:

1. Behavioral objectives -- statements of what the educational program is supposed to accomplish, the conditions under which it is to accomplish them, and the criteria whereby success in accomplishing them can be determined.

2. PPBS (Planning, Programming, Budgeting System) -- a management tool first employed in national defense and designed to identify relationships between product outcomes and costs for various alternatives.

3. Needs assessment -- a formal attempt to determine the educational needs of a population or subpopulation.

4. Systems analysis -- actually a conglomerate of techniques associated with operations research and computer simulation, recognizing always the interrelationships of the components of a system.

5. PERT (Program Evaluation Review Techniques) and other network-based management tools -- tools designed primarily to assist administrators in monitoring the effective operation of an ongoing system.

The parties to the accountability push -- or debate -- are more interesting than the techniques. They include teachers, administrators, minority groups, parents, psychometricians, and, of course, external observers:

Teachers. Lessinger has predicted that in education's accountable future the "teacher would become a manager, rather than a presenter of information" (1971, p. 57). Fred Hechinger has explained the positive involvement of the United Federation of Teachers in implementing a plan to "establish procedures to hold the [New York City] schools and staffs accountable for their success in educating children" in terms of the lesser attractiveness of the alternatives:

> "Widespread difficulties in schools...can create outright community anger which tends to arouse often irrational demands that the schools be held responsible for overcoming all...social ills" (1971, p. 7).

He feels too that system-based attempts to upgrade performance are to be preferred by the union to performance contracting with external agencies or to the voucher system.

Robert Shaerman, Director of Research, American Federation of Teachers, suggests that accountability may be nothing more than "pie in the eye" of teachers. He reports on a resolution passed by representatives of the Federation in terms of such questions as these:

> Can "the advocates" guarantee that performance contracting will not take the determination of education policy out of the hands of the public?
>
> Can they say, with a straight face, that performance contracting does not threaten to establish a new monopoly of education?
>
> How can they state that performance contracting would not subvert the collective bargaining process and reduce teacher input?
>
> Is performance contracting not predicated on the false assumption that educational achievement can be improved in the vacuum of a machine-oriented classroom, without changing the wider environment of the poverty-stricken child? (1971, p. 62).

Deterline questions the "justification for expecting [teachers] to do better, or for holding them accountable for doing so...unless someone else accepts accountability for teaching those teachers relevant skills beyond those they already possess, and unless the conditions that limit their effectiveness can be changed" (1971, p. 17).

Educational administrators. The Superintendent of Schools of Hartford, Connecticut, states unequivocally that state and local education governing bodies have no choice but "to take a leaf from business...and refuse to develop and promote new educational programs and techniques, refuse to commit public funds, and refuse to employ personnel, until we first establish clear goals..., until we develop ways to measure accomplishment of these goals, and until we set up logical techniques to employ in reaching them" (1971, pp. 38-39). The Assistant Superintendent in Nashville, Tennessee, however, cautions that accountability for schools is different from accountability for other organizations (Deck, 1971). In general, school administrators seem more supportive of accountability than do spokesmen for other groups. Perhaps they agree that it is primarily an administrative innovation and not an instructional one (Barrows, 1971).

Black groups. Kenneth Clark, although supporting some activities associated with accountability, has "warned that the accountability proposals would be seriously undermined if they are to be used 'as a semantic cover for the old alibis' of why lower-class children cannot be expected to succeed" (Hechinger, 1971, p. 7). Representatives of other black groups are stating that accountability is what they have been talking about all along. But many add that they want it on their own terms -- and under their own control.

Parents. This group, while increasingly vocal and active about the operation of schools, if one judges by newspaper and television accounts, does not appear to have much specific representation on the panels currently arguing the case of accountability. Is it any longer safe to assume that, if their taxes aren't raised and if their children don't have to travel too far to school, aren't underfoot at unscheduled times because of school closings, seem to be learning something and staying out of trouble, and eventually get into colleges or careers, they won't care what the magic formula is called?

Psychometricians. Since test scores are viewed as the primary basis for determining whether educational objectives have been met and accountability established, it is only natural that those concerned with the properties of tests have had something to say about the matter. Mostly they have said that those letting and signing performance contracts are at best naive. Stake and Wardrop, for example, after reviewing the properties of gain scores, have concluded simply that "individual-student gain on a currently available standardized test should not be used as a criterion of successful instruction" (1971, p. 2). Tennon (1971) has pointed to the frequent lack of congruity between the behavioral objectives of a particular instructional segment and the kind of nationally normed test that other stipulations of present performance contracts require. (Some have suggested substituting criterion-referenced tests.) Other issues raised by this group include the validity problems associated with "teaching for the tests," comparability of alternate forms of tests, and the appropriate unit (individual, class, school, system) to which accountability procedures should be applied.

External observers. Fred Hechinger of The New York Times rejoices at least in the fact that the more sophisticated discussions of accountability recognize "that many factors contribute to a child's record" and he alone cannot be held responsible for it (1971, p. 7). Sociologist Melvin Tumin said, in another context,

> It is sociologically axiomatic that when a number of parties are involved in any social enterprise, and when the enterprise fails, each party will lay maximum blame for the failure on the others, and will assume only minimum blame, if any, for itself. As a corollary, it follows that the official verdict of guilt for failure will be imposed on that party who is weakest or least able to fend off the imposition of the official stigma....
>
> There are numerous...evidences of the deep commitment of American education to blaming children for failing to learn as much as the "standards" demand that they shall....
>
> But all of this seems very much in the process of change... for nearly 20 years, starting just after World War II, the teachers of America, and their teachers, were attacked from all sides for the educational failures of children. Then, for a brief moment, until a temporarily successful counter-attack was launched, the families of children...were held to be essentially defective.
>
> Most recently, it is a combination of the educational establishment...and of the corollary lack of community control of the schools that has been made the major scapegoat....
>
> Whatever our supreme ignorance on many key educational questions may be, it seems quite clear...that family life, community organization, and the schools are all contributors to the educational outcomes of the children (1969, pp. 7-9).

It would be cavalier to conclude this overview of accountability without even mentioning Texarkana, Arkansas, and Gary, Indiana. So they

will be mentioned -- in the context of conclusions drawn from reviews of those performance contracts by another external observer, Minnie Perrin Berson. Mrs. Berson speaks regularly to thousands of teachers in the pages of the journal of the Association for Childhood Education International. She asks: "Is it really fair to expect Gary's schools to be flourishing oases in the midst of the many unresolved urban problems that surround them?...can outside education-mechanics bring in magical learning solutions by converting a school into a skill-shop?" She continues:

> Accountability is hardly achieved by simple test measures in which Mr. Lessinger so firmly believes. When children are continually given exercise sheets that resemble achievement test items, they can play the testing game with great savvy. So doing does not assure that they have mastered critical skills of reading comprehension and interpretation that differentiate mechanical mastery from fundamental learning growth.
>
> For the latter, more is involved than taking over a school, bypassing teachers, hiring aides for one-sixth of the salary, and giving them fancy titles for checking the piecework in the child-learning factory....
>
> Educational accountability worthy of its name requires that teachers, administration and community be accountable to each other with honesty, compassion and determination (1971, p. 343).

Educational accountability has become a catch-all for everyone's frustrations; many technical defects have been identified in applications of the tools associated with it. Nevertheless, it is enjoying a considerable vogue, and it is stimulating conversations between diverse groups concerned with American education. Where do we go from here? Many possibilities exist. Three -- for different reasons -- deserve special consideration:

1. The first is the most cynical. A few more performance contracts with the kind of bad press Dorsett received from Texarkana, the failure of capable organizations to devote their attention to

refining present accountability tools and developing new ones, inadequate systems for disseminating information about appropriate techniques and training educators to use them, a degree of cumbersomeness and expense associated with accountability ventures that makes administrators reluctant or unable to launch them, overemphasis on the engineering-financial aspects of accountability to the exclusion of the educational-personal ones, and predictions derived from the history of adoption of educational innovations -- some or all of these could work to erase "educational accountability" from the vocabulary in a relatively short time, to be replaced perhaps by the name of a new game for educators to play.

2. Assuming that accountability is sustained by positive events, developments, and climate, then in a few years we might see a great many educational systems and institutions with more precisely defined objectives, indices and measures compatible with those objectives, systems for collecting and analyzing data longitudinally, clear identification of who is accountable for what (with related schedules of reward and punishment), and efficient management systems that facilitate operational planning and monitoring and associate cost with effectiveness. A rosy picture? It would certainly seem so. But let us pause for a moment to think about the fundamental emphasis of accountability.

The fundamental emphasis is on <u>output</u>. Many proponents of accountability would concern themselves with little else. Even the more sophisticated models that mention input, only measure it as it exists. They do not raise the basic issues of the nature of the population to be educated, the present requirements of our highly urban-technological society, and the needs of the individual for personal fulfillment. In other words, proceeding from the basic line of thinking about accountability, the most brilliantly executed and successful demonstrations of it stand little chance to do more than validate the present educational system -- to show that schools are doing a good job of what they were supposed to be doing a long time ago.

In Education and the Cult of Efficiency, Callahan talks about Bobbitt's approach to education:

> The standards and specifications for steel rails were set by the railroads, not by the steel plants, and the specifications for educational products should be set by the community, not by educators. A school system...can no more find standards of performance within itself than a steel plant can find the proper height or weight per yard for steel rails from the activities within the plant (1962, p. 83.)

3. This leads to a third consideration about where we go from here. Is it possible that the current fire of concern about education that accountability has helped to fan is at a sufficient height to lead to some receptivity to the idea of a drastic reformulation of education? Is it possible to invent a new system or series of systems

- that is conceptualized and operated in the context of the demands society makes upon individuals and the opportunities it offers them,
- that takes into account the characteristics of various populations to be educated and is committed to the development of individuals rather than to teaching certain subjects,
- that recognizes that development encompasses a broad range of skills and talents, ranging from self-understanding to interpersonal skills to advanced technological competencies (Grant, 1970), and including the abilities to restructure society in the future,
- that is dedicated to the propositions that development should continue throughout a person's lifetime and education should not be the responsibility of any single social institution, and

- that is not constrained by structures and strictures from the earlier system, covered as it is by the Band-Aids of lowering and raising compulsory school age, social promotion, and the many other attempts to doctor creeping irrelevance?

Accountability leans very heavily on methods from engineering, industrial management, and accounting. Wouldn't engineers, managers, and accountants prefer to lend their talents, along with those of educators, legislators, behavioral scientists, and other representatives of our society, to the enterprise of developing new educational models appropriate to the waning years of this century, rather than to dissipate them in the thankless task of patching up or patinizing a system from another era?

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